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Crises and the Roman Empire

Proceedings of the Seventh Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Nijmegen, June 20-24, 2006)

Edited by Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn and Daniëlle Slootjes

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Luuk de Blois (photograph by Erik van ’t Hullenaar).

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CONTENTS

Preface ix
List of abbrevations xi

DISCUSSING CRISIS

Introduction 3
Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn and Daniëlle Slootjes
Was there a crisis of the third century? 11
Wolf Liebeschuetz

CRISIS AND THE EMPIRE

Krise oder Nichtkrise – das ist hier die Frage. Köln und sein Territorium in der 2. Hälfte des 3. Jahrhunderts 23
Werner Eck
Britain during the third century crisis 45
Anthony R. Birley
La crise de 238 en Afrique et ses impacts sur l'empire romain 57
Arbia Hilali
The principate – lifebelt, or millstone around the neck of the Empire? 67
John Drinkwater
Exemplary government in the Early Roman Empire 75
Michael Peachin
À propos de l'Édit de Gallien 97
Pierre Cosme
The Caesonii in the third century A.D.: the impact of crises on senatorial status and power 111
Inge Mennen
The reappearance of the supra-provincial commands in the late second and early third centuries C.E.: constitutional and historical considerations 125
Frederik J. Vervaet

La crisi del terzo secolo e l'evoluzione delle artiglierie romane 141
Salvatore Martino

CRISIS AND THE ECONOMY

Tiberius Gracchus, land and manpower 155
John W. Rich
Some thoughts on the nature of the demographic 'crisis' of the second century B.C. 167
Luuk de Ligt
Gibbon was right: the decline and fall of the Roman economy 183
Willem Jongman
The Antonine plague and the 'third-century crisis' 201
Christer Bruun
The Late Republican West: imperial taxation in the making? 219
Tony Naco del Hoyo
The impact of the third century crisis on the international trade with the East 233
Dario Nappo
Demise and fall of the Augustan monetary system 245
Koenraad Verboven

CRISIS AND THE EMPEROR

L'identité du prince face à la crise: construction d'un discours et usage de la *memoria* 261
Stéphane Benoist
Mapping the representation of roman imperial power in times of crisis 275
Erika Manders
The emperor's family on coins (third century): ideology of stability in times of unrest 291
Mariette Horster
The employment of epithets in the struggle for power. A case study 311
Janneke de Jong

Crises and ritual of ascension to the throne (first–third century A.D.) 327
Patrizia Arena
L'affrontement ideologique entre Gallien et Postume: l'exemple des bustes casques et des bustes à attributes Herculeens 337
Claire Grandvallet

CRISIS IN (LEGAL) WRITING

A crisis of jurisprudence? The end of legal writing in the classical tradition 355
Bernard Stolte
Codex Justinianus 6.21.1: Florus's case 367
Willem Zwalve
Elementi giuridici ed economici nella *Historia Lausiaca* 379
Antonio Polichetti
Philosophen zwischen Kaiserzeit und Spätantike. Das 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr. 397
Johannes Hahn
Zu einigen Strukturveränderungen der Literaturrezeption im Zeitalter der Krise des Imperium Romanum (3.–6. Jahrhundert) und deren Ursachen 413
Armin Eich

EPILOGUE

Mapping the crisis of the third century 431
John Nicols

Index 439

PREFACE

These proceedings of the seventh workshop of the international network Impact of Empire mark a moment of transition, though not, we hope, of crisis. At the beginning of the workshop, which took place at the Radboud University Nijmegen from 20–24 June 2006, Lukas de Blois stepped down as chairman of the network. He is one of the 'founding fathers' of this highly successful project, and has been instrumental in its success. As one of only few scholars in the field, he has been able to systematically include both archaeology and the use of Roman law in his research, and these interests have been consistently reflected in the topics discussed at the various workshops.

Even after his retirement from chairing the network, Lukas de Blois will remain active within the various Impact of Empire activities. His role as chairman is filled by his Nijmegen successor Olivier Hekster, who, together with Lukas de Blois, Gerda de Kleijn (Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen) and John Rich (University of Nottingham) will be editor of the new 'Impact of Empire' series. This series, published by Brill, will include monographs and edited volumes on 'the many and multifarious consequences of the actions and sheer existence of the Roman Empire in the wide, culturally heterogeneous region it dominated'.

Though the theme of this workshop, and some of the contributions which are included, reflect the scholarship of Lukas de Blois, this is not a *Festschrift*. The volume aims to analyse how (the concepts of) 'crises' have had an impact on the development and functioning of the Roman Empire from the Republic to Late Imperial times. In order to do so, it includes 29 papers dealing with a wide variety of themes, though of course, much more can be said on the topic.

The seventh workshop of the network was funded by the Netherlands Organization of Scientific Research (NWO), the Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the Research School of Classics in The Netherlands (OIKOS), and the Radboud University of Nijmegen, in particular the Faculty of Arts (HLCS), the research programme 'The Ancient World', and the departments for PR and External Relations. We are very grateful for their support, which made organizing the workshop possible. The editors are also grateful for the assistance of the following individuals for their help during the organisation of the

workshop and/or the editorial process: Martijn Icks, Janneke de Jong, Erika Manders, Inge Mennen, Jasper Oorthuijs, Kim Fiona Plas, Freke Remmers, and of course Lukas de Blois. The workshop was a festive event, and much livened up by Peter Derow, whose presence at and contribution to the workshop were much appreciated. His sudden death on December 9th, briefly after letting the editors know that his contribution needed some rethinking was a shock.

Inevitably, this volume is dedicated to Lukas de Blois. To a large extent, 'Impact of Empire' is his accomplishment. Though he has let go of his 'pater potestas', his 'auctoritas' remains undiminished.

Nijmegen, January 2007

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AE	*L'Année Épigraphique* (Paris 1888)
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der Neueren Forschung* (Berlin 1970–)
BGU	*Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen (later Staatlichen) Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden* (Berlin 1892–)
BMCRE	H. Mattingly, C.H.V. Sutherland, E.A. Sydenham et al., *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum* (London and Oxford 1923–)
CAH	*Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge 1923–)
CCSL	*Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina*. (Turnholti 1953–)
CIG	*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum.* 4 vols. (Berlin 1828–1877)
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, consilio et auctoritate Academiae litterarum regiae Borussicae editum.* (Berlin 1863–)
CIS	*Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum* (Paris 1881–)
DK	H. Diels und W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Zurich 1985)
DNP	H. Cancik, H. Schneider und M. Landfester (eds.), *Der Neue Pauly Enzyklopädie der Antike. 13 Bände Altertum A-Z, 5 Bände Rezeptions- und Wissensgeschichte A-Z, 1 Registerband* (Stuttgart 1996–2003)
FIRA	*Fontes iuris Romani anteiustiniani.* (Florentiae 1940–1943)
IDR	*Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae*
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae* (Berlin 1903–)
IGGR	*Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes*. 3 vols. (Paris 1906–1926)
IGItal	E. Miranda (ed.), *Iscrizioni Greche d'Italia: Napoli I* (Roma 1990)
ILS	H. Dessau (ed.), *Inscriptiones latinae selectae*. 3 tom. and 5 vols. (Berlin 1892–1916; 1954–1955; 1962)
Inscr. It.	*Inscriptiones Italiae* (Roma 1931–)
JACT	*Joint Association of Classical Teachers*
MAAR	*Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* (Rome 1917–)
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
OGIS	W. Dittenberger (ed.), *Orientis graeci inscriptiones selectae*. 2 vols. (Leipzig 1903–1905)

Ol.	*Olympiad*
Pap.Agon.	P. Frisch (ed.), *Zehn agonistische Papyri* (Opladen 1986)
P.Alex.Giss.	J. Schwartz (ed.), *Papyri variae Alexandrinae et Gissenses* (Bruxelles 1969)
P.Bad.	*Veröffentlichungen aus den badischen Papyrus-Sammlungen* (Heidelberg 1923–), Series continues with *P.Heid.* I.
P.Berl.Frisk.	H. Frisk, *Bankakten aus dem Faijûm nebst anderen Berliner Papyri* (Göteborg 1931)
P.Bub.	*Die verkohlten Papyri aus Bubastos* (Opladen 1989–1998)
P.Cair.Isid.	A.E.R. Boak and H.C. Youtie (ed.), *The Archive of Aurelius Isidorus in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, and the University of Michigan* (Ann Arbor 1960)
Pap.Euphr.	*Euphrates papyri* = D. Feissel and J. Gascou (eds.), *Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrates*. Part I in *Journal des Savants* 1995, 65–119, nos. 1–5 (reprinted in *SB* 22.15496–15500); Part II in *Journal des Savants* 1997, 3–57, nos. 6–10 (reprinted *SB* 24.16167–16171); Part III in *Journal des Savants* 2000, 157–208, nos. 11–17.
P.Gen.	*Les Papyrus de Genève* (Genève 1896–)
PIR[1]/*PIR*[2]	*Prosopographia Imperii Romani. Saec. I, II, III.* Berlin, 1897–1898. Second edition, pars I–V, Berlin-Leipzig 1933–.
P.L.Bat.	*Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava* (Leiden 1942–)
P.Lips.	*Griechische Urkunden der Papyrussammlung zu Leipzig.* (Leipzig 1906 Band 1; Leipzig 2002 Band 2)
P.Lond.	*Greek Papyri in the British Museum* (London 1893–)
PLRE	A.H.M. Jones, J. Martindale and J. Morris (eds.), *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*. 3 vols. (Cambridge 1970–92)
P.Oxy.	*The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (London 1898–)
P.Sarap.	J. Schwartz (ed.), *Les Archives de Sarapion et de ses fils: une exploitation agricole aux environs d'Hermoupolis Magna (de 90 à 133 p.C)* (Paris 1961)
PSI	*Papiri greci e latini* (Firenze 1912–)
P.Turner	P.J. Parsons and J.R. Rea (eds.) *Papyri Greek and Egyptian edited by various hands in honour of Eric Gardner Turner on the occasion of his seventieth birthday* (London 1981)
P.Westminster Coll	*Papyri Westminster College*

RE	A.F. Pauly, G. Wissowa and W. Kroll, *Real Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (München 1894–1980)
RIB	R.G. Collingwood and R.P. Wright (ed.), *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain* (Oxford 1965–)
RIC	H. Mattingly et al. (eds.), *Roman Imperial Coinage* (London 1923–)
RIT	G. Alföldy (ed.), *Die römischen Inschriften von Tarraco*. 2 Vol. (Berlin 1975)
RMD	*Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* (Rom 1916–)
RRC	M.H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage* (Cambridge 1975)
SB	F. Preisigke et al., *Sammelbuch griechischen Urkunden aus Ägypten*, (Strassburg 1915–)
Stud. Pal.	C. Wessely (ed.) *Studien zur Palaeographie und Papyruskunde* (Leipzig 1901–1934)
TRAC	*Theoretical Roman Army Conference*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* (Bonn 1967–)

DISCUSSING CRISIS

INTRODUCTION

Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn and Daniëlle Slootjes

Every empire encounters crises. The Roman Empire was no exception to this rule. In fact, one could argue that crises were instrumental for the creation of the empire and for the various changes in structure it underwent over the ages. Perhaps the two most obvious of such crisis-caused changes were the transition from Republic to Empire and, much later, the period of the so-called 'third century crisis', which would eventually change the empire from a 'principate' into Diocletian's 'dominate'. In the continuous scholarly debate concerning both of these periods, various contributions by Lukas de Blois have been of great importance. For the fall of the Republic, he has mainly though not exclusively emphasised the role of the armies, and especially of the relation between generals, common soldiers and the middle cadre, in the great transformations that took place.[1] In the ongoing discussion of the events of the third century – and indeed in the debate as to whether these events are best described as a 'crisis' – he has been even more prolific. From the publication of his *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* in 1976 onwards, he has made major contributions to the ways in which the third century has been analysed.[2] Several of these engage in the

[1] L. de Blois, *The Roman Army and Politics in the First Century Before Christ* (Amsterdam 1987); Idem, 'Sueton, Aug. 46 und die Manipulation des mittleren Militärkaders als politisches Instrument', *Historia* 43 (1994), 324–345; Idem, 'Army and Society in the Late Roman Republic: Professionalism and the Role of the Military Middle Cadre' in G. Alföldy, B. Dobson und W. Eck (eds.), *Kaiser, Heer und Gesellschaft in der Römischen Kaiserzeit. Gedenkschrift für Eric Birley* (Stuttgart 2000), 1–21; Idem, 'Army and general in the late roman republic', in P. Erdkamp (ed.), *A companion to the Roman Army* (Oxford, forthcoming 2007).

[2] Main contributions: 'The third century crisis and the Greek elite in the Roman Empire', *Historia* 33 (1984), 358–77; 'The crisis of the third century in the Roman Empire: a modern myth?', in L. de Blois and J. Rich (eds.), *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire.* Impact of Empire 2 (Amsterdam 2001), 204–217; 'The onset of crisis in the first half of the third century A.D.', in K.-P. Johne, Th. Gerhardt und U. Hartmann (eds.), *Deleto paene imperio Romano. Transformationsprozesse des Römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert und ihre Rezeption in der Neuzeit* (Berlin 2006), 25–36; 'Emperorship in a period of crises. Changes in emperor worship, imperial ideology and perceptions of imperial authority in the third century A.D.', in L. de Blois, P. Funke and J. Hahn

current argument on the use of the word 'crisis' regarding the period from A.D. 193–284. As so often, definition is crucial. It seems likely that some authors would disagree less fiercely with one another, if they would use a similar way of describing the concept. This theme, in fact, has been taken up extensively by Liebeschuetz in his contribution to this volume. Similarly, Lukas de Blois has offered a starting point. In his concluding remarks at the end of the workshop (not included in these proceedings), after many deliberations on exactly this point, he proposed a definition of crisis in which the central notions are that problems are "deeper, more complex and many sided" and that they "could result in changes in lifestyles and social structures, and could threaten the continuity of the Roman system". This volume incorporates contributions dealing with several of the areas in which many sided problems have often been presumed, and indeed articles which discuss the changes in lifestyles and social structures that result from the various 'crises' which the empire had to deal with. We therefore feel that it is a wholly fitting tribute for Lukas de Blois on the occasion of his retirement as chairman of the international network Impact of Empire.

Crisis, as mentioned above, is a many-facetted concept. During the workshop four themes in particular came to the fore. They were, firstly, the way crisis impacted on regions and the organisation of the Roman empire; secondly, crises and the Roman economy; thirdly, modes in which crises influenced the presentation of the emperors and their family; and, fourthly, the impact and reception of crisis on (legal) writing. The articles in this volume are organised accordingly. Besides the themes, the notion of crisis itself was often at issue, as was discussion on how to make Roman crises conceptually visible. On the first point, the article by Liebeschuetz set the scene, and it is therefore placed alongside this introduction at the very beginning of the volume. On the second point, a wonderful example on how to approach historical crises using the internet as a teaching tool is given by Nicols. His contribution is placed as an epilogue to these proceedings. It provides a powerful reminder of the importance of visualisation of concepts, and the use that modern media can play in this process.

(eds.), *The Impact of Imperial Rome on Religions, Ritual and Religious Life in the Roman Empire*. Impact of Empire 5 (Leiden and Boston 2006), 268–278.

Crisis and the Empire

Much of the discussion in recent years as to whether or not one can speak about a 'third century crisis' has focused on regional differentiation. If in certain areas there was continuity and relative peace – it is argued – one should not speak of a crisis of empire.[3] However, as Eck shows in his article, which is based upon the opening lecture of this workshop, crisis in one area of the realm had its inevitable consequences in other regions as well. That aside, he argues that there was at least a perception of crisis by the inhabitants of the empire. In this light people dedicating *pro salute imperii* clearly indicate that at least some felt that "the continuity of the Roman system" as a whole was threatened.[4] This perception, however, need not have been accurate. Developments in certain regions must have been much more positive than in others. Tracing specific areas of the empire throughout the third century gives insight in how provinces could function and – to an extent – flourish. In such a way, Birley analyses the British Isles. At the very opposite end of the Empire, the province of Africa certainly flourished, as has often been stated already. Yet, perhaps under the influence of regional differentiation, political developments in the outlying regions of the empire began to increasingly impact upon the centre. In fact, the periphery was taking on functions that had previously been the prerogative of the centre. These tensions, especially in light of the acclamation of emperors – the most visible way of influencing society – are looked at by Hilali.

The succession of rulers was always a problem for the empire, which, at least technically, did not have a formalised form of succession. Drinkwater, whose article takes a more holistic view of the empire, stresses how there were inherent flaws in the whole way the empire, and especially the position of the emperor in it, was conceived. The lack of institutionalisation of the modes in which the realm was run is also taken up by Peachin, who stresses the importance of *exempla* to define the ways in which the emperor could function. The sheer

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[3] As for instance discussed extensively by Ch. Witschel, *Krise – Rezession – Stagnation? Der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Frankfurt am Main 1999).

[4] *CIL* 13.7844. See Eck in this volume, pp. 33–34. Cf. also *AE* 1965, no. 30 (= *IDR* 221, Apulum): *I O M D et deae Suriae Magna[e] Caelesti pro salute perpetui imperii Romani et leg. XIII Gem. Flavius Barhadadi s(acerdos) I.D. ad leg. s.s. VLMP.* We owe this reference to Tony Birley.

existence of the empire, one could thus argue, or at least the modes in which the empire was run, were critical, if not begging for continuous crisis. The position of the emperor as an aristocrat, much stressed by Drinkwater, had consequences for the relationship between the emperor and the men who ran the empire with him. There was continuous tension between the aristocrat-emperor who had to surround himself with other aristocrats whose status outweighed their actual capacities, and the emperor-in-crisis-time, who had to find capable men to support him. The reign of Gallienus is often put forward as the period in which this tension led to a 'degradation' of the old senatorial order. In this light, however, the context of the famous edict of Gallienus has not been taken sufficiently into account, as Cosme suggests. Still, there were undeniable changes in the relations between the emperor and the great families of old. Such a situation may be described as a crisis for these old families, but it did create possibilities for new clans to come to the fore. The ways in which a new family could establish itself within the empire in unstable times are explored by Mennen. What is loss for one group of people is almost always potential gain for another group. Changing times, in any case, ask for changing measures. These could be at an administrative level, as shown by Vervaet, but also took place at a much more pragmatic level. An increase in warfare, and changes in the ways battles had to be fought, led to changes in the construction of physical weapons. A case study on that very point is provided by Martino.

Crisis and the Economy

Crises, as mentioned above, can be perceived as actual, structural or more incidental, empire wide or regional. Yet, in all of these cases, economic fluctuations and the social consequences of these fluctuations are often used as undeniable signs of crisis. Interpreting these signs is not as straightforward as one might think. The (perceived) man power shortage in the late Roman Republic illustrates the point. Few developments have been given so much attention in recent research, yet opinions still differ widely. Different takes on the problem are given here by Rich and by De Ligt. Though the editors do not expect the discussion to end here, the papers do show how crises can arise at the end of a period of seeming stability. Especially in a society like the Roman Empire, manpower was crucial. Hence, also, the important

role of the Antonine plague in discussions on the end of the Antonine era, Gibbon's much quoted "most happy and prosperous" period of the whole of history. Again, the volume pairs two articles with different takes on the matter. All the same, both Jongman and Bruun stress the importance of looking at the Antonine plague when discussing the 'third century crisis'.

Socio-economic changes may cause crises. On the other hand, new socio-economic structures can also develop as a result of crises. The latter seems to have been the case with the organization, and especially taxation, of the Roman provinces at around the beginning of the Common Era. As Naco del Hoyo shows, the ad hoc measures in the Civil Wars at the end of the Republic generated the taxation framework which would be characteristic for the empire. Sometimes, however, crises only illustrated how well the system had been working all along. Thus, Nappo shows how political changes in the third century may have changed the trade routes between Rome and the east – but also emphasises how old structures were maintained within a new topographical framework. Likewise, Verboven shows how the Roman monetary system proved to be surprisingly resistant to obvious moments of crisis.

Crisis and the Emperor

In discussing crises in the Empire, the role of the emperor has already been emphasised. As mentioned above, emperorship developed over time. As such, it could be greatly influenced by moments of crisis. To an extent, it was through reactions to such moments that the emperorship was formulated. One of the crucial aspects of later emperorship, for example, was the ever increasing 'sacralisation' of the ruler. How this process took shape within the various crises in the first three centuries of the Roman Empire is set out by Benoist, who in a way elaborates on the importance of *exempla* which Peachin stressed. In a different way, Manders highlights the importance of placing the changing representation of the emperors within a proper chronological framework, and sketches ways in which to draw conclusions from such developments. Times of crises require strong rulers. Often, however, the absence of such rulers exacerbated crises. This might also explain the importance of dynastic motives in the representation of Roman emperors, as discussed by Horster. Depicting the imperial family implied potential

continuity. Emperors used visual codes that were developed earlier; by the third century, however, the differences between the purported perception and actual political developments must have been enormous. Where Horster looks at the way the emperors made their claims on coinage, De Jong analyses the way emperors portrayed themselves in Egyptian papyri. Imperial titulature employed in these documents, as she shows through a case study of the epithet ἀήττητος (invincible), shows how representation is shaped in context, by deliberate choices of individuals. Though looking at the different media at imperial disposal is an interesting way of analysing changes in emperorship, it is not the only way. Arena, for example, chooses to look at the way in which the acclamation of emperors is ritualised over time. Like the sacralisation-process sketched by Benoist, she recognizes the importance of moments of crisis for the development of the ceremonies surrounding the emperor. These ceremonies, she argues, were greatly influenced by repeated succession-crises, once again underscoring Drinkwater's point on the inherent problems within the very structure of the Principate. Because of this structure, it is difficult to distinguish between legitimate succession and usurpation.[5] Thus, especially in the third century, rulers with various claims to legitimacy had to compete for the acceptance of the different groups that constituted the empire. Especially in the third century, with sections of the Empire trying to form separate unities, this competition became acute. Grandvallet's article on the ideological claims put forward by Gallienus and Postumus, demonstrates this clearly. The article also, once again, draws attention to the important role played by Gallienus in the development of third-century events, and hence to the ongoing relevance of De Blois' *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*.

Crisis in (legal) writing

In the previous section, various sources through which the Roman Empire can be approached have already been mentioned. Coins, inscriptions and papyri are obviously crucial for periods which are sometimes lacking adequate literary sources. One type of source, written though not strictly speaking literary, is often ignored in discussions; the legal

[5] See on this point especially the publications by E. Flaig, in particular *Der Kaiser herausfordern. Die Usurpation im römischen Reich* (Frankfurt 1992).

texts which form the vast majority of surviving Latin records from the Roman Empire. In fact, laws often deal with crises, and crises certainly have their influence on the writing of law. The importance of legal structures for the Roman Empire is clear to all, and any volume dealing with the relationship between crises and the development of the Roman Empire ought to include papers on legal developments. These developments also incorporate the changing position of the individuals writing law; the famous jurists like Ulpian and Papian reached their zenith under the Severans, but then disappeared of our horizon. This disappearance has been linked to the military crises of the second half of the third century. With an increasing need of military men, the position of the legal specialists eroded.[6] Yet, Stolte, in his contribution, shows that the departure of legal writers from the political scene need not be so strongly linked to the end of classical legal writing as if often maintained. The position of individuals may have changed in crisis, but legal structures were not so easily worn away. Still, changes in society had clear impact on the law. Thus, Zwalve shows that the famous *Constitutio Antoniniana* created potential problems for which legal solutions had to be found. Many would have had advantage from being under Roman law, but at the same time, the new structure seemed to limit some of the inheritance privileges that the Roman military had obtained. In times of military unrest, nobody wants to alienate the soldiers, and the potential crisis was solved. The consequences of this solution, as Zwalve shows, had long lasting effects.

Legal writing, which also can be used to analyse changes in society (Polichetti), is not the only form of writing, nor jurists the only 'intellectuals' surrounding the ruler. Julia Domna's patronage of the likes of Philostratus is only one of the better known examples of the importance of 'philosophers in politics'. At the end of the third century, the previously dominant and public position of philosophy, firmly placed in rhetoric, had however disappeared, to be replaced by a more contemplative and private philosophy. As Hahn argues, this 'crisis' of the earlier philosophical notion cannot be explained by any 'crisis' of the third century; rather, it is the result of a much longer process developing during the first and second centuries, in which philosophy increases and

[6] See for instance L. de Blois, 'Roman jurists and the crisis of the third century A.D. in the Roman Empire', in L. de Blois (ed.), *Administration, Prosopography and Appointment Policies in the Roman Empire*. Impact of Empire 1 (Amsterdam 2001), 136–153.

then decreases in centrality. Similar 'cyclical' developments can also be traced within other spheres of literary production. It would, however, be a mistake to try to parallel these developments to direct events in history. Societal crisis need not be directly mirrored in contemporary literary constructs. Indeed, as Eich shows, societal changes often have unexpected consequences on the form and contents of literary texts, which may take some time to evolve.

In various ways, then, the contributions to this volume explore the impact of crises on the Roman Empire. Much, of course, remains to be discussed. One of the great strengths of Lukas de Blois has always been that he appreciates open discussion. Unlike Ambrose Bierce, who defined discussion as "a method of confirming others in their errors",[7] for Lukas de Blois the opinions of others are central to the development of his own thought. This volume, we hope, will stimulate him to many more musings, on crises of empire, and much besides.

Nijmegen, January 2007

[7] A. Bierce, *The Devils' Dictionary* (London 1911), s.v. 'Discussion'.

WAS THERE A CRISIS OF THE THIRD CENTURY?

Wolf Liebeschuetz

Why is this question worth asking? Generations of historians have described the long series of troubles experienced by the Roman Empire in the third century as the *crisis* of the Empire, and have felt no doubt whatsoever that the word crisis was an appropriate description of what was happening to the Empire in that century. But today many scholars positively reject the application of this word to this period. Continuity is stressed. Transformation is the preferred term, even 'anarchy' is acceptable, but 'crisis' is out.[1] With at least the basics facts of the story undisputed, why is there such radical disagreement about how they are to be assessed?

When we look at the way the 'forbidden' word was used by earlier historians we note that it was used naively. The old *Cambridge Ancient History*, volume 12 of 1939 is entitled *The Imperial Crisis and Recovery, A.D. 193–324*, implying a crisis of 131 years, but chapter 6, written by Andreas Alföldi, under the title: 'The crisis of the Empire (A.D. 249–270)', implies a crisis of merely 21 years. But neither in the title of the volume, nor in the text of the chapters of Alföldi, is the word 'crisis' used in a precisely defined sense. Rather, it is employed in a broad sense, as a convenient, indeed obvious, word to describe a period filled with dangerous problems,[2] irrespective of whether you think of the period as a single long crisis, or as a succession of many crises. For depending on the temporal perspective, the word is equally suited to describe a single critical episode or a long succession of emergencies. It was certainly not proposed as an explicatory 'model', a technique which ancient historians did not employ in 1938.

The word 'crisis' appears again in the title of Ramsay MacMullen's *Roman Government's Response to Crisis A.D. 235–337*, published in 1976.

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[1] That is why L. de Blois (who still finds the word 'crisis' useful) thought it worthwhile to write 'The crisis of the third century A.D. in the Roman Empire: a modern myth?', in L. de Blois and J. Rich (eds.) *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire*. Impact of Empire 2 (Amsterdam 2002), 204–217.

[2] German: Epochenbezeichnung.

MacMullen does not put forward a 'model' either. He uses the word 'crisis' as a convenient word to sum up a situation in which the strategies long used by the empire to preserve its existence proved totally inadequate, and chronic emergency forced the Roman government to innovate. The focus of the book is not on the 'crisis', but on the government's response to the challenge offered by it.

It was in the book of Geza Alföldy, *Die Krise des römischen Reiches, Geschichte, Geschichtschreibung, und Geschichtsbetrachtung: ausgewählte Beiträge* of 1989, that the concept of 'crisis' itself moved into the centre of the picture.[3] Alföldy argues that individuals living through the disturbed years of the third century sensed that they were living in a period of 'crisis', that is through a period of drastic deterioration of many aspects of social life, with some individuals even going as far as to interpret their alarming experiences as foreshadowing the end of the world. Alföldy's argument is based to a very large extent on Christian texts, notably passages in the writings of Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen and Commodian, but also on verses of the eighth and thirteenth Sibylline oracles, which were composed in a tradition of Jewish apocalyptic writings. In addition he draws attention to some passages from the pagan historians Dio Cassius and Herodian, which convey an extremely gloomy view of contemporary Rome.[4] So for Alföldy 'crisis' is the right word to describe the circumstances of the third century because crisis was what contemporaries thought that they were experiencing.

We now come to the 'enemies of crisis'. The opposition to the use of the word is comparatively recent. As far as I know, Karl Strobel's *Das Imperium Romanum im "3. Jahrhundert": Modell einer historischen Krise?*, published in 1993,[5] was the first important study to take this line. Incidentally it was also the first book to consider that the word 'crisis' when

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[3] This work by Alföldy is a collection of essays including 'The crisis of the third century as seen by contemporaries', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 15 (1974), 89–111.

[4] In fact Dio Cassius certainly thought that the death of Marcus Aurelius was a turning point in that the condition of the Romans from that point onwards descended from a golden to an iron age (73.36.4). The deterioration showed itself in the tyranny of successive emperors, and above all in the repeated breakdown of discipline in the army (see especially 80.4–5 on his own experience in 229 A.D.). There is no final and systematic assessment of the condition of the empire, perhaps because of the fragmentary state of the last books of the History, but I suspect that Dio Cassius did think that there was a chronic crisis of military discipline. This would not have been an objective assessment, though certainly one based on personal experience.

[5] K.Strobel, *Das Imperium Romanum im "3. Jahrhundert": Modell einer historischen Krise?* (Stuttgart 1993).

applied to the third century, was not just a convenient description or an evocative metaphor, but a 'model', using the term rather loosely.[6] His finding is that the model does not fit. But his book is not really aimed at any 'crisis model'. His approach is rather to discuss and, to his own satisfaction, refute the arguments of Geza Alföldy. His basic case is that the statements cited by Alföldy as evidence that contemporaries had reached the conclusion that they were living through a crisis of the Roman world, showed nothing of the sort. They merely record instinctive reactions to particular dangerous or threatening experiences. So the Christian texts are a response to the Decian persecution, which seemed to them to confirm the doctrine of the approaching end of the world and the subsequent second coming of Christ. Likewise the pessimistic utterances of Herodian and Dio Cassius reflect personal disappointments. Strobel argues that none of these testimonies expresses considered anxiety for the future of the empire. He also points out that by its very nature a crisis can normally only be recognized when it is over, and that this fact makes it unlikely that any Roman of the third century was in a position to diagnose a state of crisis.

Doubt whether Romans who had lived through most of the third century could in fact have reached the considered diagnosis that their society was passing through a crisis, does not rule out the possibility that a crisis had in fact occurred. Strobel addresses this issue also, but rather casually. He has not analyzed the events of the third century anything like as thoroughly as he has analyzed the texts discussed by Alföldy. He does however conclude that the events of the third century did not amount to a crisis. He even insists that, relatively speaking, the Roman world of the third century was a remarkably stable system.[7] He goes as far as to reject even the description of what happened in the third century as "accelerated change" (*beschleunigter Wandel*) and concludes that "change, that is structural change" (*Wandel bezw. Strukturwandel*) is the appropriate term.[8]

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[6] Strobel's problem is, "ob das '3. Jahrhundert' als Modell einer historischen Krise gesehen werden kann, also nicht nur in einer sachlichen Retrospektive des Historikers, sondern in der erlebten Gegenwart in der Geschichtswahrnehmung der Zeitgenossen." Strobel 1993, op. cit. (n. 5), 32.

[7] "Aber selbst im Vergleich mit dem mittelalterlichen und dem neuzeitlichen Europa haben wir in der betrachteten Periode ein bemerkenswert stabiles System vor uns", Strobel 1993, op. cit. (n. 5), 347.

[8] Strobel 1993, op. cit. (n. 5), 346–347.

In 1999, Christian Witschel produced a social and economic survey of the condition of the Roman world in the third century, synthesising not only literary but also archaeological evidence. He is not so much concerned with the history of emperors and political and military history, as with registering the condition of the different regions of the empire, and assessing the character and extent of change that took place in each during the course of the century.[9] His investigation is extremely thorough, and would seem to present a fair summary of the current state of scholarly research. Throughout his investigation he emphasizes the great variety of the changes that took place in different parts of the empire, insisting that there were positive as well as negative developments. He agrees that the empire in the fourth century was in important ways significantly different from that of the second century, but he stresses that basic structures – such as the empire itself, the literary culture of the elite, the foundations of the economy and the essentials of life in cities and countryside – remain the same. He also points out that many of the developments of the third century can be shown to have their first origins in the second century. He is prepared to allow others to apply the concept of 'crisis' for the extensive troubles that affected the empire in the years 250/60 and 280/90,[10] but this clearly is not what he thinks himself. His overall conclusion is that there was no overall crisis.[11] I think it is fair to say that Witschel thinks that generally speaking the concept of 'crisis' is one the historian of the third century can do without.

Reluctance to talk of crisis is more than the personal choice of a few individuals. It is a part of the intellectual atmosphere of the last twenty years or so. Volume 12 of the new edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History* still has a chapter 'Maximinus to Diocletian and the 'crisis''. But John Drinkwater, the author of this chapter, also notes that much recent work has taken the line that the word 'crisis' should

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[9] C.Witschel, *Krise, Rezession, Stagnation?: der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n.Chr.* (Frankfurt am Main 1999), 24: "Insgesamt gesehen erscheint mir das römische Reich vom 2./1. Jh. bis zum 5./6.Jh. geprägt durch ein recht stabiles Gesamtsystem".

[10] Witschel 1999, op. cit. (n. 9), 375.

[11] Witschel 1999, op. cit. (n. 9), 377, "Das römische Reich sah also im 4. Jh. an nicht wenigen Punkten anders aus als im 2. Jh. Viele dieser Veränderungen betrafen eher Äußerlichkeiten, während die politischen, sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Grundstrukturen in einem bei der Schwere der militärischen Probleme im 3. Jh. erstaunlichen Umfang erhalten blieben". Whether we see these changes as superficial or profound is of course a matter of perspective.

not be applied to what happened in the Empire in the third century, and that the appropriate description is transformation and change.[12] This also seems to be the view taken by David Potter in his recent monumental *The Roman Empire at Bay A.D. 180–395*.[13] He too sees history as a process of gradual change and transformation.[14] So also Averil Cameron: "these days (…) will not be concerned with crisis, but rather with the myriad changes on the ground that coincide with the passing of centuries".[15]

Light on the reasons for this widespread rejection of 'crisis' is thrown by another sentence of Averil Cameron: "There is a kind of consensus today that the concept of crisis is somehow no longer appropriate, and that instead we should use terms which are relatively value-free, such as 'change' or 'transformation'".[16] The word 'crisis' is rejected because it is not thought to be value free, because it is thought judgemental. Strobel makes essentially the same point. In his view, even a naïve application of the term crisis to the circumstances of the third century involves both preconceptions (*Vorgaben*) and value-judgements (*Wertungen*), and both of these are bound to have a distorting effect on the interpretation of the evidence.[17] In other words the use of 'crisis' offends because it is taken to be an example of judgementalism,[18] a state of mind the condemnation of which is deeply rooted in contemporary academic culture of the English speaking world, and in northern Europe generally.

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[12] J. Drinkwater, *CAH*[2] 12, 28–66, relevant 64.

[13] D.S. Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay A.D. 180–395* (London 2004). The book includes a very detailed narrative history of the third century, which in many ways complements the social and economic history of Witschel. Unlike Witschel, Potter does not discuss the relevance of general concepts, but generally speaking the concept of 'crisis' has no place in his history, except in a very limited descriptive sense as for the title of the chapter on the consequences of the murder of Commodus.

[14] It could however be objected that the 'The Empire at Bay' in his title might be thought to be almost interchangeable with 'the empire in crisis'.

[15] Averil Cameron, 'The perception of crisis', in *Settimane di studio del centro italiano sul' alto medioevo* 45 (1998), 9–31, citation is on 31. A related view is expressed in P. Horden and N. Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea, a Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford 2000), 339, "Mediterranean historiography should attempt to forego the luxury of the vision of the past in which differences can readily be explained by pointing to major, sudden, discontinuities". But theirs is an ecological history, which is not quite the same.

[16] Cameron 1998, op. cit. (n. 15), 10.

[17] Strobel 1993, op. cit. (n. 5), 346–47.

[18] On this tendency see my 'Late Antiquity, and the rejection of "decline", and multiculturalism,' *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 45 (2001), 1–11 (= *Decline and Change in Late Antiquity* (Aldershot 2006), no. XVII).

Why the concept of 'crisis' should be considered 'judgemental' and therefore 'politically incorrect', is not at all obvious. After all the resolution of a medical crisis, or indeed any other crisis, need not result in the patient's condition becoming worse. The crisis might be resolved with the affected subject being destroyed, or weakened, but also with its being restored to its previous condition, or even becoming stronger. The metaphor captures the magnitude and climacteric character of the danger, not the 'goodness' or 'badness' of its resolution.[19] But if many Roman historians today assume that to describe the condition of the Roman empire in the third century as undergoing a 'crisis' is equivalent to condemning the empire that emerged from the crisis as inferior, this is explicable from the historiography of the subject.

Since the Renaissance, classical Greek and Roman literature, art and politics were seen as uniquely valuable examples, and were upheld as such in the schools and universities of Europe. But this exemplary classical culture seemed to have ended around the turn of the second century. That is why what came after was characterized by Edward Gibbon as "decline and fall", and as "senile decay of classical life and culture" (Alterung des Antiken Lebens und seiner Kultur) by Jacob Burckhardt.[20] In this perspective, the numerous troubles of the third century could be seen as the 'crisis' which had set classical civilization on its fatal downward path. A most influential exposition of this view was Mikhail Rostovtzeff's *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, first published in 1926. Rostovtzeff interpreted the events of the third century in the light of the Russian revolution, and argued that the instability of the third century was essentially a class war in which the peasantry, represented by the army, fought against and confronted the middle and upper classes, and destroyed them and their culture.

The reader of Rostovtzeff's book is led to the conclusion that the third century and its crisis, or crises, more or less finished Roman civilization. In fact however Rostovtzeff was mistaken. The famous last chapter is historically the weakest part of his great work, but the idea that 'crisis' necessarily involves decline has remained, and since today for many of our colleagues 'decline' has become a dirty word, so has crisis.[21] In fact quite a lot of Witschel's case against 'crisis' is made up

[19] The mere act of diagnosing the presence of disease might – I suppose – be considered a value judgement.

[20] J. Burckhardt's title of chaper 7 in, *Die Zeit Konstantins des Grossen* (Leipzig 1852).

[21] Cf. the rejection of 'catastrophe' in Purcell and Horden 2000, op. cit. (n. 15), 339:

of arguments that neither at the start of the third century nor at its end was the condition of the empire weaker or inferior to what it had been in the first two centuries.[22]

Whether this is right or not, the fact remains that the word crisis clearly and compactly sums up a good deal of what happened in the third century. Among the synonyms for the word crisis listed in the Oxford Compact Thesaurus are 'disaster', 'emergency', 'danger' and 'turning point'. There can surely be no argument that in the third century the Roman Empire faced situations of danger, emergency and disaster extremely frequently. For the first time in its existence it had to fight major wars on its eastern and western frontiers at the same time. There was an endless succession of usurpations. For some time it looked as if Gaul and the eastern provinces might break away into separate empires. There was serious inflation. The huge rise in prices following Aurelian's coinage reform can hardly be described as anything else than a currency crisis.[23] There were outbreaks of plague. Hardly anybody, not even Witschel, would deny, that he years 260–280 were years of extreme danger for the empire as a whole, so there is no reason why they should not be described as years of crisis. But the term could be just as properly applied to every one of the century's usurpations. Indeed the entire period from the murder of Alexander Severus to the rise of Constantine might be treated as a single, sustained crisis of the imperial office. It is in fact difficult to avoid using the term.

It is true that the empire survived and recovered. But it did so only with great effort.[24] In the course of the struggle a number of institutions and practices which had been basic to the functioning of the early empire were transformed. I might mention first of all the changed appearance of many city centres, and the great reduction in the use of civic inscriptions and of monuments commemorating public figures.

'The relatively frequent repetition of events studied – their normality – makes us want to associate ourselves with those who are reluctant to use the notion of catastrophe'.

[22] Witschel 1999, op. cit. (n. 9), 375, "Auf keinen Fall war das Gesamtreich bereits um 200 von einer (Vor-)Krise erfaßt", and 376, "Zahlreiche Kontinuitätslinien konnten durch diese global gesehen nur recht kurze Phase der Schwäche und Unsicherheit nicht nachhaltig gestört werden".

[23] M. Corbier, *CAH*[2] 12, 425.

[24] Drinkwater is surely right to stress that the Romanisation and consequent coherence of the elite over wide stretches of the empire was a principal reason why the empire did not fall apart. See *CAH*[2] 12, 63, and *The Gallic Empire: Separatism and Continuity in the North-western Provinces of the Roman Empire A.D. 260–274* (Stuttgart 1987), especially 125–131, on the Roman character of the Gallic Empire.

I have argued elsewhere that this is much more than a matter of fashion, but represents a profound transformation of the mentality of civic elites,[25] whose support had made it possible to administer a very large empire with very few paid officials. Then the city of Rome ceased to be the centre of the empire, and the Roman senate lost its place as the empire's deliberative assembly. Moreover it became clear that the empire needed more than one emperor. Finally the traditional religion ceased to be taken for granted, and at the end of this period the emperor could afford to abandon and even persecute it. The abandonment of long established cults surely does reflect a change of mentality that is very profound indeed.

The word crisis implies that the dangerous pressure builds up to a climax, a decisive turning point. Difficulties of the empire in the third century built up to several climaxes, which were resolved in a succession of turning points. Nevertheless we can isolate a remarkably short span of time within which large areas of traditional civic behaviour disappeared. It was, by and large, in the years 240–250 that all over the empire the construction of monumental building and the setting up of new commemorative inscriptions (including – and this is surely significant – dedications to gods) very nearly stopped, never to be resumed on anything like the old scale. Of course if you search all over the Empire, and over decades of time, you will find exceptions to this development, and the transformation was not equally complete all over the Empire. The process was geographically and chronologically very uneven, but by and large the disappearance of evidence for monumental commemorations of civic patriotism and civic religion is far more striking than the exceptions. As far as visible remains are concerned, the period 240–250 marks the end of the early empire.

I have argued that the word crisis is an appropriate description of what happened to the Roman Empire in the third century. This does not mean that Witschel and others who have assembled evidence for gradual change and transformation are wrong. History is after all a continuous process. One development leads to another. There never is

[25] Witschel 1999, op. cit. (n. 9), 376, "…allgemeines Unsicherheitsgefühl, so daß auch in nicht direkt von äußeren Eingriffen bedrohten Gebieten für eine Weile nur wenig Aktivitäten entfaltet wurden", is to my mind a totally inadequate explanation, as I have argued in 'Transformation and decline: are the two really incompatible?', in J.-U. Krause and C. Witschel (eds.), *Die Stadt in der Spätantike – Niedergang oder Wandel?* (Stuttgart 2006), 463–483, at 464. See also my *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford 2001), 11–19.

a complete break. Any significant change in society can be shown to be the result of a chain of cause and effect going back a long time. So it is not at all surprising that Witschel is able to show that many features of the empire of the fourth century have their roots in the empire of the early third, or late second, or even earlier centuries. But to insist that the historian must restrict himself to observing gradualness is bound to produce a misleading picture. It seems to me at least that both Strobel and Witschel have consistently minimized the traumatic nature of much of the third century,[26] as well as the magnitude and significance of the changes involved in the restoration of stability.[27] Emergency and catastrophe are important aspects of the historical process, and this volume contains numerous examples of the serious and lasting damage caused by the civil wars and invasions of the third century.[28]

To argue that 'crisis' is the right word to describe the many emergencies of the third century, is not to propose the word as a 'model'. Keith Hopkins defined the term 'model', as it is used by sociologists, as the simplification of a complex reality, designed to show the logical relationships between its constituent parts. Models allow us to construct whole pictures, into which the surviving fragments of ancient source material can be fitted.[29] I do not think there could be a 'crisis model' in Hopkins' sense. The word crisis covers far too wide a range of critical situations. If one wants to construct a model one has to be more specific. One can construct a model of the Principate, which will help to explain the crisis of the imperial office.[30] Marx constructed a model of ancient society founded on slavery. According to this model the troubles of the third century represent a crisis of a slave owning society. Rostovtzeff's treatment of the third century involves the use of a Marxist model against Marx, a class war model. A model that would satisfactorily demonstrate the logical relationship between the different phenomena that constitute our knowledge of the third century would

[26] See above the generalization of Strobel cited in n. 7.

[27] See above the generalizations of Witschel cited in nn. 11 and 26.

[28] The bias of Strobel and Witschel and other opponents of crisis is of course an example of the contemporary intellectual tendency which prefers to treat the end of the empire without any reference to catastrophe or decay, and even tends to imply that the Roman world never came to an end at all. See B. Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization* (Oxford 2005), especially 1–10 and 182–83.

[29] K. Hopkins, 'Rome, taxes, rents and trade', in W. Scheidel and S. von Reden, *The Ancient Economy* (Edinburgh 2002), 190–230, at 191–92.

[30] See the article of J. Drinkwater in this volume.

have to be a model of the structure of the empire. It would not be a 'crisis model'.

To assert that there was a crisis, or a succession of crises, in the third century is in the first place an act of description. How far the blood and tears of a 'crisis' can work as a discrete *cause* remains an open question. If we look at our own time, nobody would deny that the 1914–1918 war could properly be described as a crisis, perhaps a crisis of the European nation-states.[31] But does that mean that it forced the development of Europe in a direction it would not otherwise have taken? Would the central European monarchies have survived without it? Would there have been no Russian revolution, no great depression? Or would the eventual outcome have been the same, only arrived at more slowly? One can similarly ask whether the prolonged and intensifying crisis of the third century was the principal reason why there is so conspicuous a difference between the classical Roman world and the world of the fourth century?[32] Is it conceivable that without the crisis of the third century there would have been no Late Antiquity, or would Late Antiquity have arrived all the same, only later?

Notthingham, October 2006

[31] Even though in most of Europe the basic social institutions survived the Great War, just as many basic institutions of Roman society survived the third century.

[32] R. MacMullen 1976, *Roman Government's Response to Crisis, A.D. 235–337* (New Haven, 1976), vii: "He (the historian) emerges into a gradually clearing light, but into a different country – as if he had entered the depths of Monte Bianco and discovered an exit from Mont Blanc". This of course is hyperbole. But general acceptance that the world of the later empire is in many important respects different has generated the idea of Late Antiquity.

CRISIS AND THE EMPIRE

KRISE ODER NICHTKRISE – DAS IST HIER DIE FRAGE. KÖLN UND SEIN TERRITORIUM IN DER 2. HÄLFTE DES 3. JAHRHUNDERTS

Werner Eck

Fünfzig Jahre sind vom Tod Kaiser Severus Alexanders im Jahre 235 bis zur Übernahme der Macht durch Diocletian 284 vergangen. In dieser Zeit versuchten mehr Kaiser die Macht im Imperium Romanum zu übernehmen, als in den über 250 vorausgehenden Jahren seit Augustus das Reich beherrscht hatten. Wie viele Herrscher es genau waren, die für längere oder kürzere Zeit das Imperium oder besser kleinere oder manchmal auch größere Teile des römischen Raumes beherrschten, läßt sich nicht genau sagen. In Dietmar Kienasts Kaisertabelle zählt man, einschließlich der Söhne und Brüder von Herrschern, wenn niemand übersehen wurde, 77 Personen.[1] Manche konnten sich nur wenige Tage behaupten, andere immerhin einige Monate, nur wenige mehrere Jahre. In vielen Regionen des Reiches wusste man oft nicht mehr, wer der faktische, geschweige denn, wer der legitime Herrscher war. Nur ein einziger dieser Kaiser war mehr als ein Jahrzehnt an der Macht: Gallienus. Zusammen mit dem Vater Valerian im Jahr 253 zunächst als Caesar akklamiert, bald darauf zum Augustus erhoben, behielt er die Macht, auch nach der Gefangennahme seines Vaters im Jahr 260, noch bis 268 in seinen Händen. Erst dann wurde er bei der Belagerung Mailands ermordet. Und doch ist es gerade dieser am längsten lebende Kaiser, mit dem der Tiefpunkt des römischen Reiches verbunden wird, jedenfalls in der antiken Überlieferung.[2] Wenn von einer Krise des Imperium Romanum gesprochen wird, dann fällt sein Name. In gewisser Hinsicht steht sein Name fast als ein Synonym für Krise, und zwar nicht nur seiner eigenen Zeit, sondern des dritten Jahrhunderts überhaupt.

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[1] D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle* (Darmstadt 1996[2]), 183–263.

[2] Siehe vor allem die *vita Gallieni* der *Historia Augusta*, ferner Aurelius Victor 33; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 33; Eutropius 9, 8–11; vgl. z. B.J. Wilkes, 'Provinces and frontiers', *CAH*[2] 12, 212–268; 222 f.

In einem 1976 erschienenen Werk eben zu Gallienus, dessen Autor, Lukas de Blois, auch die Thematik des diesjährigen Impact of Empire angeregt hat, stehen deshalb, nicht überraschend, die folgenden Sätze:[3]

> It was not only the countless wars and other forms of violence that made the third century a period of darkness and misery. The whole century was a sequence of economic crises, social upheavals, natural disasters and religious changes and a time of cultural decadence. One of the sectors, which was particularly affected by the wars, the violence and the general sense of insecurity was, of course, agriculture. Furthermore it was hard hit by plagues, natural catastrophes and the depopulation which they entailed.

26 Jahre später, im Jahr 2002 kam Lukas de Blois, der die vorausgehenden Sätze in seiner Dissertation geschrieben hatte, erneut auf die Thematik zurück, nun in der Auseinandersetzung mit Beiträgen, die die Vorstellung von der Krise relativieren oder sogar weitgehend als ungerechtfertigt erweisen wollten.[4] Der Beitrag erschien in der Publikation zum zweiten *Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire*. Am Ende der dort gemachten Überlegungen fasste Lukas de Blois seine Sicht in den Worten zusammen:

> In conclusion: the crisis of the third century in the Roman empire was harsh reality indeed in the war-ridden areas and the adjacent hinterlands, especially in the period 249–284. In these territories a deep, many-sided crisis threatened traditional structures and started to bring about fundamental changes. In other regions there was continuity of existing social, economic, cultural, and religious structures, but in an ever more tense situation in which local elites could not make ends meet and had to give up building activities and the concomitant epigraphic habit. Everywhere the status of local notables declined, to the advantage of military foragers and controlling bureaucrats and *curatores*.[5]

Dies war seine Antwort auf verschiedene, in den Jahren vorher erschienenen Beiträge, die sich umfassend mit der Krise, oder wie manche dieser Autoren dann sagen, mit der so genannten Krise des 3. Jahrhunderts auseinandergesetzt haben. Zu diesen Werken zählten vor allem das Buch von Karl Strobel: *Das Imperium Romanum im '3. Jahrhundert'*,[6] und

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[3] L. de Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* (Leiden 1976), 9.

[4] L. de Blois, 'The crisis of the third century A.D. in the Roman Empire: A modern myth?', in L. de Blois und J. Rich (Hg.), *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire*. Impact of Empire 2 (Amsterdam 2002), 204 ff.

[5] De Blois 2002 (Anm. 4), 217.

[6] K. Strobel, *Das Imperium Romanum im '3. Jahrhundert'* (Stuttgart 1993).

das Werk von Christian Witschel: *Krise, – Rezession – Stagnation? Der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.*[7] In anderen Werken, vor allem außerhalb des deutschen Sprachraums,[8] wird dagegen ohne allzu viele Einschränkungen das Wort Krise auf das gesamte oder zumindest Teile des 3. Jahrhunderts angewendet.[9] Um nur zwei Beispiele zu nennen: Band XII der *Cambridge Ancient History* von 2005 trägt den Gesamttitel: "The Crisis of Empire A.D. 193–337";[10] und in seiner Darstellung des 3. Jahrhunderts von 1997 überschreibt Michel Christol sein drittes Kapitel, das die Zeit von 249 bis 274 umfaßt, mit „Crises et boulversements".[11] Die genannten Werke stehen für viele andere Beiträge, die hier nicht im Einzelnen genannt werden können und müssen.[12]

Die grundlegendste und in vieler Hinsicht auch produktive Kritik an der Vorstellung, das dritte Jahrhundert sei als eine fundamentale Zeit der Krise anzusehen, kam, wenn ich recht sehe, von Karl Strobel und Christian Witschel, die sich in unterschiedlicher Weise mit der Vorstellung und den unterschiedlichen Aspekten auseinandersetzen, wie sie in den beiden Zitaten von Lukas de Blois stellvertretend zum Ausdruck kamen. Dabei will Strobel insbesondere zeigen, daß die Aussagen, die in den literarischen Quellen, vor allem den christlichen, von der Forschung weithin als Reflex von Krisenbewußtsein verstanden wurden, durchaus als Topoi oder „als Stoffe der Endzeitprophetien" angesehen werden müssen, die sich aber aus Vorstellungen theologischer Natur speisen, nicht jedoch eine entsprechende Sicht der verschiedenen Autoren über ihre eigene Zeit reflektieren.[13] Christian Witschel dagegen, der sich insbesondere mit dem Westen des Reiches detailliert befasste, allerdings auch den Osten weithin einbezog, betont, daß „von einem

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[7] Chr. Witschel, *Krise – Rezession – Stagnation? Der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Frankfurt 1999). Vgl. auch seine Zusammenfassung der Dissertation unter dem Titel: 'The Roman West in the third Century A.D.', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 17 (2004), 251 ff.

[8] Bei dem für Studierende geschriebenen Buch von M. Sommer, *Die Soldatenkaiser* (Darmstadt 2004), das ebenfalls den Krisenbegriff thematisiert, hat man an nicht wenigen Stellen den Eindruck, es sei etwas schnell geschrieben worden.

[9] Vgl. auch den von Andrea Giardina im September 2006 in Rom veranstalteten Convegno „La crisi del III secolo d.C. Un bilancio storiografico".

[10] Hg. A. Bowman, P. Garnsey und A. Cameron (Cambridge 2005).

[11] M. Christol, *L'empire romain du IIIe siècle* (Paris 1997).

[12] Die Literatur ist zu umfassend, als daß sie auch nur im Ansatz hier angeführt werden könnte. Umfassende Literaturangaben finden sich etwa in *CAH*² 12, 786 ff. und bei Witschel 1999 (Anm. 7), passim und ders., 2004 (Anm. 7), 274 ff.

[13] Strobel 1993 (Anm. 6), 299 ff.; das Zitat S. 309.

einheitlichen Vorgang im Sinne des organischen Krisenbegriffes, der alle Bereiche gleichermaßen, zur gleichen Zeit und vor allem mit den gleichen Folgen erfasst hätte", keine Rede sein könne. Die Vorstellung, „alle Veränderungen hätten sich aufgrund eines gemeinsamen Auslösers in einem einheitlichen Prozeß und in die gleiche Richtung entwickeln müssen", erweise sich „als Hindernis für eine adäquate Einschätzung der sicherlich turbulenten Zeit des späteren 3. Jhs."[14]

Beiden Autoren ist durchaus zuzugestehen, daß genauer danach zu fragen ist, was jeder heutige Autor unter Krise verstehen wolle, welche zugehörigen Phänomene gemeint sind, wann sie einsetzen, wozu sie führen und wie weit sie als allgemeine Erscheinung angesehen werden dürfen, die das gesamte Reich oder zumindest große Teile erfasst haben. Man wird wohl auch kaum widersprechen, wenn Christian Witschel zeigt, daß etwa die Wirtschaft nicht in allen Westprovinzen in derselben Entwicklungslinie verlief, vielmehr manche Reichsteile noch eine deutliche Aufwärtsentwicklung aufwiesen, während sich in anderen bereits frühzeitig, lange vor der üblicherweise als Krise verstandenen Epoche, Zeichen einer Stagnation zeigten oder, wie man in manchen Fällen vielleicht sagen sollte, sich zu zeigen schienen. So sind beispielsweise in Italien nach der Zeit des Antoninus Pius kaum mehr Bauinschriften zu finden. Doch besagt dies, daß man dort aus wirtschaftlichen Gründen nicht mehr in der Lage war, neue Bauten zu errichten? Kann sich in dieser Beobachtung nicht vielleicht auch zunächst der simple Effekt spiegeln, daß die Gemeinden in der baulichen Infrastruktur gesättigt waren und im Allgemeinen keine neuen öffentlichen Bauten mehr brauchten? Denn nur solche erscheinen überhaupt in Bauinschriften; über private Bauten ist daraus nichts zu gewinnen. Wie auch immer: Die ungleichzeitige Entwicklung in den verschiedenen Provinzen ist ein Faktum, das nicht zu leugnen ist und bei der Bewertung der Entwicklung des Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert, wie Witschel zu Recht betont, stets präsent sein sollte. Nur ist zu fragen, wo denn in der modernen Forschung, jedenfalls der letzten Jahrzehnte, davon ausgegangen wurde, daß, wie es Witschel formuliert, „alle Veränderungen sich aufgrund eines gemeinsamen Auslösers in einem einheitlichen Prozeß und in die gleiche Richtung hätten entwickeln müssen?"[15] Die Unterschiede in der Situation etwa der Provinzen in Nordafrika gegenüber denen an der

[14] Witschel 1999 (Anm. 7), 376–377.
[15] Witschel 1999 (Anm. 7), 377.

Rhein- und Donaufront in der Mitte des 3. Jahrhunderts sind evident und wohl auch fast allen unmittelbar einsichtig. Insoweit besteht m. E. kein grundsätzlicher Gegensatz zwischen der Analyse Witschels und der Sichtweise vieler anderer.

Auch ist jedermann klar, daß die konkreten unmittelbaren Folgen durch die Angriffe reichsfremder Völker zum einen in den verschiedenen Provinzen unterschiedlich waren und daß vor allem die Außengrenzen nicht überall betroffen waren. Nordafrika wäre zu nennen, in gewissem Umfang die spanischen Provinzen, auch Südgallien zu einem Teil. Dafür waren viele Provinzen jedoch an vielen Stellen mehrfach oder über Jahrzehnte den Angriffen ausgesetzt: Die Region am Niederrhein und in Nordgallien nicht weniger als am Oberrhein, die Gegenden an der oberen Donau und an der unteren Donau, sodann die Provinzen um das Schwarze Meer und die östlichen Grenzprovinzen, dort vor allem von Seiten des Neupersischen Reiches. Hinzu kommen sodann noch mehrere weite Einbrüche, die über See bis nach Kleinasien, nach Achaia und auch nach Spanien führen, also in Herzländer des Imperiums.[16] Selbst wenn die Schäden, die dadurch verursacht wurden, nicht überall in gleicher Weise tief greifend waren, vor allem, wenn die Städte selbst nicht direkt erobert und geplündert wurden, mußte der Effekt sich auf das Befinden der Menschen auswirken, vielfach sogar katastrophal, und zwar nicht nur materiell, sondern auch mental. Denn Jahrhunderte lang hatte man in den meisten Reichsteilen keinen auswärtigen Feind mehr gesehen, sondern nur gelegentlich und vielleicht spät von Einfällen gehört. Nun aber war der Feind an vielen Stellen eine unmittelbare Erfahrung geworden, die zudem durch Berichte überall verbreitet und vielleicht sogar noch verstärkt wurde. Auf jeden Fall vervielfachte sich dadurch deren Wirkung. Daß das Gefühl der *anxiety*, wie es Dodds formuliert hatte,[17] auch ohne konkrete direkte Bedrohung Wirkungen haben konnte, ja haben mußte, kann wohl kaum bestritten werden. Dennoch wurde z. B. gegen die tief greifenden Wirkungen der militärischen Bedrohung eingewandt, Rom habe mit seinen Truppen zumeist recht schnell wieder die Feinde vertrieben, ein dauernder Verlust sei außer in Dakien und im Dekumatland zunächst nicht eingetreten. Das ist zwar weithin durchaus zutreffend; Rom konnte mit seinen

[16] Wilkes 2005 (Anm. 2), 220.

[17] E.R. Dodds, *Pagans and Christians in an Age of Anxiety. Some Aspects of Religious Experience from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine* (New York 1956).

Heeren, wenn auch oft nur mit äußerster Mühe, den Zerfall des Reiches verhindern. Auch die *Semnones sive Iouthungi*, die im Jahr 259 nach Italien eingebrochen waren, wurden am 24. und 25. April 260 bei Augusta Vindelicum vom damaligen Statthalter der Provinz Raetia Simplicinius Genialis geschlagen.[18] Es wurden ihnen auch Tausende von gefangenen *Itali* wieder abgenommen. Durch den Sieg wurden jedoch das vorausgegangene Geschehen in Italien, der Schrecken und die Schäden bei der dortigen Bevölkerung nicht ungeschehen gemacht, höchstens ein wenig gemildert. Denn wenn die Germanen so viele Gefangene gemacht hatten, wie es die Inschrift sagt, war das in den betroffenen italischen Regionen nicht ohne Kämpfe und Zerstörungen abgegangen. Welche materielle Beute die Germanen gemacht hatten, wird nicht erwähnt, ist aber leicht vorstellbar. Gerade das Herzland des Reiches, das sich von den Provinzen auch dadurch unterschied, daß dort außer in Rom kein Militär stationiert war, weil bisher kaum je ein Feind von den Grenzen her gedroht hatte, war durch diesen Einbruch – und es ist nicht der einzige gewesen – aus seiner vermeintlichen Sicherheit aufgeschreckt. Dies muß zumindest für einige Zeit eine deutliche Verunsicherung in weiten Kreisen der Bevölkerung verursacht haben. Die Zeit war noch nicht so schnelllebig, daß solch tief greifende Erschütterungen sogleich wieder aus dem Gedächtnis entschwanden.

Die neue Erfahrung mit dem Feind beschränkte sich aber nicht auf Italien und seine Bewohner. Für den Sieg über die zurückkehrenden Germanen in Rätien genügten offenbar nicht die regulären Truppen der transalpinen Provinz, vielmehr wurden, neben Einheiten aus Obergermanien, auch *populares* aus Rätien selbst aufgeboten. Bewaffnete Provinzbewohner in größerer Zahl hatte man bisher als innere Gefahr angesehen,[19] jetzt mußte man notgedrungen Teile der Bevölkerung bewaffnen, um überhaupt zu einem militärischen Erfolg zu kommen.

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[18] *AE* 1993, no. 1231b (Augsburg): *In h(onorem) d(omus) d(ivinae) / deae sanctae Victoriae / ob barbaros gentis Semnonum / sive Iouthungorum die / VIII et VII Kal(endarum) Maiar(um) caesos / fugatosque a militibus prov(inciae) / Raetiae sed et Germanicianis / itemque popularibus excussis / multis milibus Italorum captivor(um) / compos votorum suorum / [[M(arcus) Simplicinius Genialis v(ir) p(erfectissimus) a(gens) v(ices) p(raesidis)]] / [[cum eodem exercitu]] / libens merito posuit / dedicata III Idus Septemb(res) Imp(eratore) d(omino) n(ostro) / [[Postumo Au]]g(usto) et [[Honoratiano consulibus]].* Vgl. M. Jehne, ‚Überlegungen zur Chronologie der Jahre 259 bis 261 n. Chr. im Lichte der neuen Postumus-Inschrift aus Augsburg‘, *Bayerische Vorgeschichtsblätter* 61 (1996), 185 ff.

[19] Das soll nicht heißen, daß Provinzbewohner generell keine Waffen tragen durften; siehe P.A. Brunt, ‘Did imperial Rome disarm her subjects?’, in ders., *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford 1990), 255 ff.

All das hatte seinen Effekt auch auf Rätien selbst. Denn der Durchzug der Germanen ging auch dort nicht ohne Schäden ab, die aufgebotenen Provinzbewohner fehlten für eine bestimmte Zeit dem allgemeinen Wirtschaftsleben, und vermutlich ist eine ganze Reihe von ihnen in den Kämpfen umgekommen. Die Schlacht bei Augsburg war kein nur kleines Gefecht; immerhin dauerte es zwei Tage.

Als Einzelereignis wäre ein solcher Einbruch von marodierenden germanischen Scharen in Italien natürlich nicht so sehr erwähnenswert; doch die Realität zeigte über Jahrzehnte hinweg ein immer sich wiederholendes Bild an zahllosen Grenzen des Reiches. Deren Wirkung auf das Bewusstsein der Menschen kann und darf man nicht leugnen, und zwar Wirkung auch dort, wo es diese Erfahrungen nicht direkt gegeben hat. Indirekt machten sich die Folgen in jedem Fall bemerkbar. Denn natürlich wurde in vielen Regionen die wirtschaftliche Basis deutlich geschwächt. Steuern konnten gerade deswegen nicht mehr oder nur noch vermindert erhoben werden. Die Bevölkerungszahl ging in nicht wenigen Regionen zurück, nicht nur wegen der unmittelbaren Verluste während der feindlichen Einbrüche, sondern auch weil die Wirtschaftskraft und die landwirtschaftliche Produktion nicht mehr auf dem alten Stand gehalten werden konnte. Gleichzeitig aber erforderten die Bedürfnisse der Reichsverteidigung sowohl einen ständigen und sogar erhöhten Nachschub an Rekruten und verursachten einen nicht geringer werdenden, sondern verstärkten Material- und Finanzbedarf. Wenn aber zahlreiche Gebiete nur noch in geringerem Umfang oder auch gar nicht mehr für die Rekrutierung herangezogen werden konnten, weil die Bevölkerung durch die Einfälle der auswärtigen Völker starke Einbußen erlitten hatte, dann mußten andernorts die notwendigen Soldaten gesucht werden, auch in Provinzen, die bisher davon weniger oder kaum betroffen waren. Noch mehr gilt dies für die Belastung durch Steuern und zusätzliche Abgaben. Da sie nicht mehr überall in der nötigen Höhe erhoben werden konnten, mußten sie auf andere umgelegt werden, die in direkter Weise weniger oder auch gar nicht von den auswärtigen Bedrohungen betroffen waren. Natürlich wussten auch die dann indirekt Betroffenen, warum ihre Last jetzt größer wurde. Der Zusammenhang wurde zwangsläufig erkannt, denn das Reich war ein komplexer, zusammenhängender Organismus. Wenn ein Teil des Imperiums litt, litten notwendigerweise auch die anderen. Die Schäden und Probleme, die sich an vielen Stellen im Reich auftaten, führten dazu, daß auch andere, nicht direkt Betroffene in anderen Regionen, unter dem zu leiden hatten, was anderswo die Bevölkerung mit voller

Wucht getroffen hatte: d. h. die Krise der einen Region hatte Folgen und Auswirkungen auf die anderen Regionen. Dies alles aber erhielt durch die Massierung der verschiedenen Elemente, die weitgehende Kontinuität in den Erscheinungen, durch die gegenseitige Beeinflussung eine bisher nicht gekannte Intensivierung. Deshalb kann und muß man spätestens seit der Mitte des 3. Jahrhunderts, wenn nicht sogar schon seit der Spätzeit des Severus Alexander, von einer Krise in der Stabilität des Reiches sprechen, nicht nur einzelner Regionen. Zwischen betroffenen und nicht oder weniger betroffenen Regionen einen grundsätzlichen, nicht nur einen graduellen Unterschied zu machen und, weil nicht *alle* Regionen in derselben Weise *alle* Krisenphänomene zeigten, eine Krise des Reiches als Ganzem abzustreiten, wie sich dies aus dem höchst lesenswerten und wichtige Einsichten vermittelnden Buch von Christian Witschel ergibt, trägt dagegen nicht zu einer umfassenden Erklärung bei und verschleiert eher das zentrale Phänomen.

Krise kann freilich nicht heißen, daß alles gleichzeitig zusammenbrach,[20] Krise bedeutet auch nicht, daß an deren Ende, wenn nur überhaupt jemand überlebte, alles anders war. Krise heißt aber, daß erkennbar und relativ plötzlich vieles anders, vor allem vieles schlechter wurde, daß die Belastungen oft als eine nicht mehr tragbare Last empfunden wurden, daß vieles nicht nur nicht mehr wie gewohnt funktionierte, sondern in seiner Funktion zusammenbrach. Dabei spielt das Gefühl der Krise eine nicht weniger wichtige Rolle als die Krisenphänomene selbst. Es ist wie bei der gefühlten Temperatur, die sich deutlich unterscheiden kann von der objektiv gemessenen. Dennoch kann sie Reaktionen hervorrufen, die vielleicht auf Grund der objektiven nicht nötig wären.

Um die Beobachtungen und Hinweise zur Frage: Krise oder Nichtkrise? aber nicht nur als abstrakte zu belassen, soll hier an einem regionalen Beispiel, das den Niederrhein, und in gewissem Umfang auch Noviomagus, Nijmegen, betrifft, nämlich an der Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium (CCAA), dem heutigen Köln, Krisenphänomene in den Jahrzehnten zwischen Severus Alexander und der erneuten Stabilisierung des Reiches seit Diocletian, erläutert werden, die in ähnlicher Form auch in anderen Regionen zu beobachten sind.

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[20] Wenn man die Krise natürlich in der Weise definiert, daß alle Erscheinungen und alle Regionen gleichzeitig, gleichmäßig und in derselben Form davon betroffen wurden, dann läßt sie sich als Erscheinung insgesamt leicht wegdefinieren, weil jedenfalls im römischen Reich allein wegen seiner Ausdehnung niemals alle Reichsteile einheitlich davon erfasst wurden.

Der Rhein war seit dem Jahr 16 n. Chr. die Grenze, die das Imperium von der germanischen Welt trennte. Außer im Jahr 69 scheint es von der rechten Rheinseite aus keine Bedrohung des niedergermanischen Gebiets mehr gegeben zu haben. Wenn in der Zeit Marc Aurels um 173/174 die germanischen Chauken die Provinz Belgica bedrohten und der Statthalter Didius Iulianus sich militärisch mit ihnen auseinandersetzen mußte und er den Einfall rasch beenden konnte, dann kann das kaum eine größere Aktion gewesen sein, da dem Legaten dieser Provinz kaum Truppen zur Verfügung standen.[21] Der Gesamtbefund einer ruhigen Entwicklung im niedergermanischen Bereich wird dadurch jedenfalls nicht betroffen. Wenige Jahrzehnte später, im Jahr 231, treffen wir jedoch auf ein auffallendes epigraphisches Monument, eine Basis in Form eines Altars, der für I. O. M., Mars Propugnator, Victoria und die Salus des Severus Alexander, seiner Mutter und des kaiserlichen *exercitus* errichtet wurde und zwar von der *legio I Minervia* unter Einschluß ihrer Auxilien. Beteiligt waren der Legionslegat Titius Rufinus sowie der konsulare Statthalter, dessen Name nicht ganz sicher zu ergänzen ist.[22] Durch die Nennung zweier Konsuln am Ende des Textes wird die Inschrift ins Jahr 231 datiert. Doch der Altar war nicht zum Darbringen eines Opfers gedacht. Vielmehr wurden auf dem Altar *[si]gna* aufgestellt – *rebus peractis*.[23] Der Stein war also in Wirklichkeit

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[21] *Historia Augusta*, *vita Didi Iuliani* 1, 7; H. van Enckevort und J. Thijssen, 'Nijmegen und seine Umgebung im Umbruch zwischen Römerzeit und Mittelalter', in Th. Grünewald und S. Seibel (Hg.), *Kontinuität und Diskontinuität. Germania inferior am Beginn und am Ende der römischen Herrschaft* (Berlin 2003), 85 wollen einen Zerstörungshorizont in Nijmegen mit diesem Einfall in Verbindung bringen; dann wäre auch Niedergermanien davon betroffen worden. Doch sind die Hinweise wohl kaum typisch genug, um diesen Zusammenhang zu begründen. Ob man aus *CIL* 13, 8598 darauf schließen muß, daß es unter Commodus am Niederrhein bei Nieukerk zu kriegerischen Verwicklungen kam, weshalb die *legio I Minervia* dorthin abgeordnet wurde, muß unsicher bleiben.

[22] Siehe W. Eck, *Die Statthalter der germanischen Provinzen vom 1.–3. Jh.* (Bonn 1985), 213.

[23] *CIL* 13, 8017 (Bonn-Beuel): *[I(ovi)] O(ptimo) M(aximo) [Marti] Propugnatori [Victo]riae Saluti Imp(eratoris) [Seve]ri Alexandri Aug(usti) et [Iul(iae) M]amaeae Aug(ustae) matri(s) eius [et e]xercitus M(arci) Aureli Se[ver]i Alexandri Pii Felicis [Inv]icti Augusti totiu[squ]e domus divin(a)e eius [le]g(io) I M(inervia) [P(ia)] F(idelis) Severiana Ale[xa]and[ria]na cum auxilii[s si]gna r[e]bus peractis [c]umq[ue] Titio Rufino [c(larissimo)] v(iro) leg(ato) [l]egionis eiu[sde]m ag[en]te sub Flav[io] [Tit]ian[o l(egato) A(ugusti) p(ro) p(raetore) c]o(n)s(ulari) n(ostro) po[n]enda [cur]avit VI Kal(endas) [—Pompeiano] et Pae[ligniano] co(n)s(ulibus)*. Vgl. dazu auch W. Eck, ‚Die *legio I Minervia.* Militärische und zivile Aspekte ihrer Geschichte im 3. Jh. n. Chr.', in Y. Le Bohec (Hg.) *Les Légions romaines sous le Haute-Empire, Actes du Congrès de Lyon (17–19 septembre 1998)* (Lyon 2000), 83 ff. Unsicher bleibt, ob eine Weihung an *Victoria Aug(usta)* aus dem Jahr 222 aus Bonn sich auf den innenpolitischen Sieg von Severus Alexander über die Faktion Elagabals bezieht oder ob auch dieses Monument ein Reflex eines Sieges der Legion gegen äußere Feinde war (*CIL* 13, 8035).

die Basis für Feldzeichen, die darauf ihren Platz fanden, offensichtlich nach einer erfolgreichen kriegerischen Aktion. Da die Feldzeichen als Dokumentation des Sieges nicht im Lager der Bonner Legion, sondern rechtsrheinisch auf offenem Feld aufgestellt wurden, muß gerade dort der Kampfplatz gewesen sein, auf dem man sich gegen Feinde siegreich behauptet hatte.

Das Monument ist deshalb von Bedeutung, weil es zeigt, daß im zeitlichen Vorfeld des großen Angriffs verschiedener germanischer Stämme nach Obergermanien und Rätien in den späten Jahren des Severus Alexander sich nicht nur dort, sondern auch am Niederrhein die Sicherheitslage wesentlich verändert hatte. Denn selbst im direkten Vorfeld der Bonner Legion genügte die Anwesenheit der römischen Truppen nicht mehr zur Abschreckung. Die Truppen mußten unmittelbar aktiv werden, um der Bedrohung Herr zu werden. Zu fragen ist freilich, ob sich die Germanen auf der rechten Rheinseite festgesetzt und die römischen Truppen so provoziert hatten. Man könnte sich das Szenario durchaus auch wie bei Augsburg im Jahr 260 vorstellen. Die Bonner Legion hat möglicherweise Germanenscharen auf ihrem Rückweg von einem Plünderungszug ins römische Gebiet erst auf der rechten Rheinseite gestellt und besiegt.[24] Daß solches, wenn es sich so abgespielt haben sollte, nicht in die literarische Überlieferung eingegangen ist, braucht nicht zu verwundern; auch vom Einfall der Semnonen nach Italien im Jahr 259 erfuhren wir nur durch das Siegesmonument von Augsburg.

Auch wenn sich der konkrete Kontext hier nicht mehr feststellen läßt, zeigt der Siegesaltar von Bonn-Beuel ohne Frage, daß es mit der Ruhe und dem ungestörten Leben auch auf der linken Rheinseite vorbei war. Tatsächlich lassen sich auch schon in den Jahren, die unmittelbar auf dieses kriegerische Ereignis im Vorfeld Bonns folgen, mehrere Münzschatzfunde im niedergermanischen Gebiet nachweisen, deren Schlußmünzen ins Jahr 238 gehören.[25]

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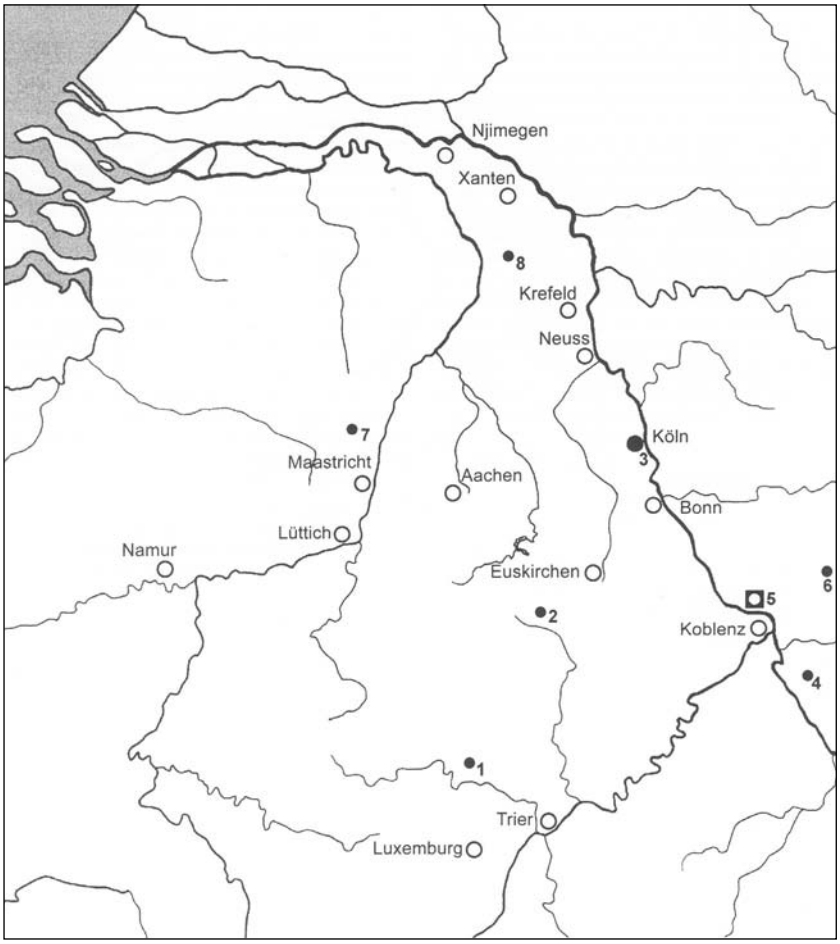
[24] Vgl. H. Schönberger, ‚Römische Truppenlager der frühen und mittleren Kaiserzeit zwischen Nordsee und Inn', *Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission* 66 (1985), 414.

[25] H.-J. Schulzki, ‚Der Katastrophenhorizont der zweiten Hälfte des 3. Jhs auf dem Territorium der CCAA. Historisches Phänomen und numismatischer Befund', *Kölner Jahrbuch* 34 (2001), 7 ff.



Karte 1.[26]

Ein unmittelbarer Nachweis für eine größere militärische Bedrohung ist daraus noch nicht abzuleiten, doch darf man daraus zumindest auf eine starke Verunsicherung der Bevölkerung in dieser Region schließen, die auch in einem überraschenden anderen Dokument seinen Niederschlag gefunden hat. Es handelt sich um einen Altar aus Gressenich in der Nähe von Aachen mit folgendem Text:[27]

[26] Diese und die folgenden Karten sind dem Aufsatz von H.-J. Schultzki (Anm. 25) entnommen. Die Ziften in den Karten beziehen sich auf den katalog bei Schultzki.

[27] *CIL* 13, 7844.

[I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)]
et genio loci pro
salute imperi Ma-
sius Ianuari et Ti-
tianus Ianua-
ri v(otum) s(olverunt) l(ibentes) m(erito) sub cu-
ra Masi s(upra) s(cripti) et
Maceri Accep-
ti, Pio et Proclo
[cos.].

Die Konsulatsangabe datiert den Altar ins Jahr 238. Zwei Personen, die nach den Namen zur einheimischen Bevölkerung zählen, dedizieren an einem weit vom politischen Zentrum der CCAA entfernten Ort südöstlich von Aachen einen Altar *pro salute imperi*, also nicht für die des damals regierenden Kaisers, sondern des Imperiums in seiner Gesamtheit. Sie sorgen sich also um die große politische Gemeinschaft, in der auch sie leben. Dieses Imperium, ihr Lebensraum, scheint nach ihrer Vorstellung der Hilfe der Götter zu bedürfen, nachdem es in den Jahren unmittelbar vor der Einlösung ihres *votum* und vor allem in diesem Jahr selbst zu solch heftigen Erschütterungen gekommen war. Ist hier nicht gerade die mentale Betroffenheit in der Bevölkerung zu greifen, von der wir sonst direkt so wenig unmittelbar erfahren?

Kein Kaiser nach Hadrian hatte noch seinen Weg an den Rhein gefunden. Es hatte keinen Grund gegeben, weshalb die *praesentia imperatoris* nötig gewesen wäre.[28] Bald nach der Mitte des 3. Jahrhunderts aber hatte sich die Situation grundlegend gewandelt. Schon 256, noch vor der Rückkehr seines Vaters Valerian von der Ostfront, sah Gallienus die Notwendigkeit, sich nach Niedergermanien zu begeben. Dort wurde auch sogleich eine Münzstätte eingerichtet,[29] ein untrügliches Kennzeichen, daß es sich nicht um einen kaiserlichen Kurzbesuch handelte. Alle Münzateliers waren Zentren kaiserlicher Präsenz und Ausgangspunkte militärischer Unternehmungen, so etwa Antiochia in

[28] Diese wird in der Bausinschrift für das Deutzer Kastell als besonders dringlich hervorgehoben. Siehe dazu W. Eck, ‚Nähe und Ferne kaiserlicher Macht: das Beispiel Köln', in L. de Blois et al. (Hg.), *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power.* Impact of Empire 3 (Amsterdam 2003), 282 ff.

[29] G. Elmer, ‚Die Münzprägung der gallischen Kaiser in Köln, Trier und Mailand', *Bonner Jahrbücher* 146, (1941), 1 ff.; G. Biegel, ‚Die Münzstätte Köln in der Zeit des gallischen Sonderreiches', *ANRW* 2.4 (1975), 751 ff.; M.R. Weder, ‚Münzen und Münzstätten der gallisch-römischen Kaiser, Teil I', *Schweizerische numismatische Rundschau* 76 (1997), 103 ff.; Teil II, *Schweizerische numismatische Rundschau* 77 (1998), 99 ff.; J.-P. Callu, *La politique monétaire des empereurs romains de 238 à 311* (Paris 1969), 198 ff.

Syrien gegenüber den Neupersern oder Viminacium an der Donau gegenüber den Feinden vom nördlichen Donauufer.[30] Wenn Gallienus eine Münzoffizin aus Viminacium an den Rhein verlegte und die CCAA als Sitz wählte, dann zeigt dies, daß er zumindest für die unmittelbare Zukunft seine eigene Präsenz am Rhein für erforderlich hielt und damit auch eine Münzstätte, die die Truppen mit Geld versorgen würde. Denn nichts konnte die Herrschaft eines Kaisers mehr bedrohen, als die unregelmäßige Versorgung der Truppen mit dem, was sie benötigten bzw. erwarteten.[31] Münzen, die im Jahr 256 bereits in der Kölner Münzstätte geprägt wurden, bezeugen auch die militärische Verstärkung, die Gallienus nach Niedergermanien sowie in den gesamten gallischen Raum gebracht hatte: *Gallienus cum exer(citu) suo* = „Gallienus mit seinem Heer" ist der Slogan, der hier verbreitet wird.[32] Kurz darauf wird verkündet: *Germanicus max(imus) (quintum)* = „der größte Germanensieger zum fünften Mal".[33] Auch Valerian begab sich in die niedergermanische Metropole, wovon wohl auch der doppelte Beiname der CCAA zeugt, wie er auf dem Bogen des Nordtores der Kolonie eingemeißelt worden ist. Von hier aus erging auch ein Schreiben an die freie Stadt Aphrodisias in der Provinz Phrygia.[34] Welche konkreten militärischen Unternehmungen die beiden Kaiser durchführten, ist unseren wenigen Quellen nicht zu entnehmen; doch allein die Präsenz der Kaiser zeigt, wie dringlich die Sicherheitssituation war, zumal Valerian zweimal in Köln erschienen ist, 256 und 258,

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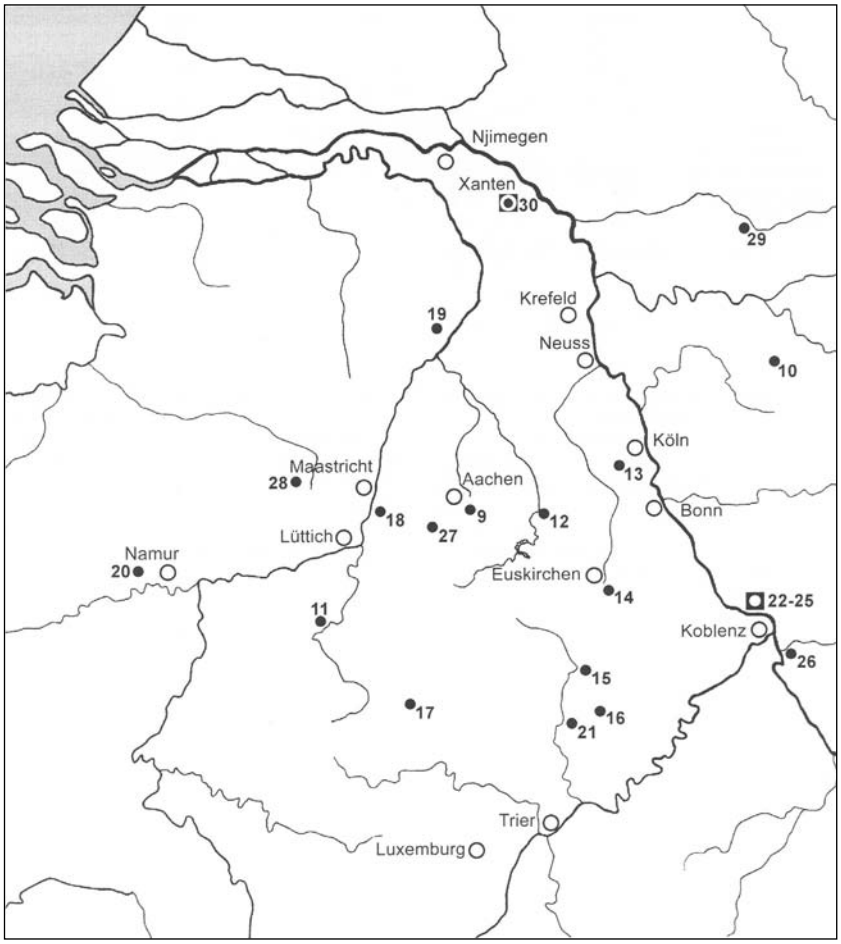
[30] Vgl. Callu 1969 (Anm. 29), 198 ff.; R. Göbl, *Die Münzprägung der Kaiser Valerianus I./Gallienus/Saloninus (253/68), Regalianus (260) und Macrianus/Quietus (260/62)* (Wien 2000), 96 ff.

[31] Vgl. die Bemerkung bei A. Eich und P. Eich, ‚Thesen zur Genese des Verlautbarungsstils der spätantiken kaiserlichen Zentrale', *Tyche* 19 (2004), 75 ff., bes. S. 103: das Heer sei von einem beutesuchenden Offensivinstrument zu einem ressourcenverschlingenden Defensivinstrument geworden.

[32] Valerianus: *RIC* 5.1, 7–8; Elmer 1941 (Anm. 29), 1 ff. Nr. 1. 4. 12a. 15; Göbl 2000 (Anm. 30), Tafelband Nr. 867 a und e.

[33] Gallienus: *RIC* 5.1, 17–19; Ellmer 1941 (Anm. 29), Nr. 19, 26; Göbl 2000 (Anm. 30), Tafelband Nr. 872b, d, l, m, n, o, p, q. Vgl. VICTORIA GERMANICA: Nr. 873b, l, q (Valerian); Nr. 874 f., l, m, n, q (Gallienus); Nr. 875b, d, f, l, m, q (Gallienus); RESTITVTOR GALLIARVM: Nr. 876l (Gallienus); ähnlich (GALLIAR); Nr. 877b, f, g, q; 878d, f (Gallienus); ähnlich (RESTIT GALLIAR) Nr. 879d, f, l, m (Gallienus); GERMAN MATER: Nr. 883g (Gallienus) (jeweils 1. Kölner Emission).

[34] Ch. Roueché, *Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity. The Late Roman and Byzantine Inscriptions* (London 1989), 1 ff. (= Text 1, von J. Reynolds); H. Galsterer, ‚Von den Eburonen zu den Agrippinensern. Aspekte der Romanisierung am Rhein', *Kölner Jahrbuch* 23 (1990), 117 ff., spez. 125 f.; W. Eck, *Köln in römischer Zeit. Geschichte einer Stadt im Rahmen des Imperium Romanum* (Köln 2004), 554.



Karte 2.

während Gallienus wohl ohne Unterbrechung am Rhein verblieb.[35] Die Nachricht der Münzen über einen Sieg über die Germanen kann man nicht einfach als propagandistische kaiserliche Selbstdarstellung abtun. Zumindest die Gefahr, die bestand, wird zutreffend beschrieben, nämlich Angriffe durch Germanen. Tatsächlich lassen sich nun weit mehr Schatzfunde nachweisen, die auf einen Zeithorizont unmittelbar vor und um 260 hindeuten (Karte 2).

[35] M. Christol, 'Les déplacements du collège impérial de 256 à 258: Cologne, capitale impériale', *Cahiers du Centre Gustave Glotz* 8 (1997), 243 ff.

Hinzu kommt eine Beobachtung, die Johannes Heinrichs für den antiken Ort Marcodurum gemacht hat.[36] Dieser *vicus* liegt unmittelbar am Ufer der Rur rund 40 km südwestlich des Zentrums der CCAA. Er bestand seit augusteischer Zeit. Im Jahr 69 war er im Zusammenhang mit dem Bataverkrieg vernichtet, aber wieder aufgebaut worden. Die lokale Münzreihe läuft kontinuierlich durch, doch dann bricht sie mit zwei nahezu prägefrischen Kölner Antoninianen des Valerian und Gallienus, die spätestens 260, eher früher geprägt wurden, ab.[37] Circa 30 verbrannte Bronzemünzen zeigen Spuren von Feuereinwirkung. Sie bezeugen ein großes Schadensfeuer, dem die Siedlung zum Opfer gefallen ist. Es ist mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit mit den frühen Frankeneinfällen in Verbindung zu bringen, denen der *vicus* im Jahr 258 oder wenig später zum Opfer gefallen ist. Es sind gerade die Raubzüge der Franken, auf die die Erhebung des Postumus zurückgeht. Gallienus hatte die niederrheinische Metropole 260 wegen des Aufstandes des Ingenuus im Donauraum verlassen müssen, aber seinen Sohn Saloninus als Caesar in Köln zurückgelassen. Als dieser von Postumus, dessen genaue amtliche Stellung nicht klar ist, die den Franken abgenommene Beute zurückforderte, riefen die Truppen Postumus zum Kaiser aus. Die CCAA wurde belagert, erstmals seit dem Jahr 69, diesmal durch römische Truppen. Die Belagerung endete mit der Ermordung des noch zum Augustus ausgerufenen Saloninus.[38] Aus all dem ergibt sich, daß offensichtlich ein nicht ganz kleiner Trupp von Franken über den Rhein hinweg in die Provinz eingedrungen ist, die erhebliche Beute errungen hatten. Nicht nur Marcodurum wurde bei einem dieser Raubzüge geplündert und zerstört, sondern auch andere *vici* und nicht wenige der vielen *villae rusticae*. Gerade diese hatten aber über zwei Jahrhunderte hinweg das Rückgrat der Landwirtschaft der CCAA gebildet, worauf die besondere Wirtschaftskraft der Agrippinenses beruhte, nicht so sehr auf der Keramik- und Glasproduktion.[39] In Krefeld-Gellep, auf das gleich nochmals zurückzukommen ist, wurden die Leichen getöteter Menschen notdürftig in einem Mithräum bestattet.[40]

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[36] J. Heinrichs, ‚Marcodurum', *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumswissenschaft* 19 (2001²), 270 ff.; ders., 'Marcodurum und Düren: A tale of two cities?', in H. Hellenkemper (hg.), *Siedlungsanfänge im NW des römischen Reiches. Koll. 2006 im RGM Köln zu Ehren von H.-G. Horn* (im Druck); ders., ‚Marcodurum. Ein vicus der frühen und mittleren römischen Kaiserzeit bei Düren-Mariaweiler', *Kölner Jahrbuch* 39 (2006) (im Druck).

[37] Heinrichs 2006 (Anm. 36), Kat. Nr. 718 und 720.

[38] Eck 2004 (Anm. 34), 556 ff.

[39] Eck 2004 (Anm. 34), 402 ff.

[40] R. Pirling, ‚Ein Mithraeum als Kriegergrab. Neue Untersuchungen im Vorgelände

Im 2. und frühen 3. Jahrhundert hatten sich um das städtische Zentrum des römischen Köln größere Siedlungs- und Handwerkerflächen entwickelt.[41] Diese gehen schon vor der Zeit des Postumus langsam zurück, die Keramikproduktion scheint sich nach Soller in die Voreifel verlagert zu haben.[42] Nur in der unmittelbaren Nähe der Tore der Kolonie sind noch kleine Flächen besiedelt, so jedoch, daß man sich innerhalb kürzester Zeit hinter die Mauern zurückziehen konnte. Das Leben vor den Mauern war zu einem Risiko geworden. Dem entspricht, daß man offensichtlich die Mauern des Koloniezentrums an nicht wenigen Stellen erneuert oder ausgebessert hat, so an einem Teilstück unter dem heutigen Dom, ebenso im Westen.[43] Das gehört zumindest teilweise noch in die Zeit vor Postumus: Ein weiteres Indiz für militärische Bedrohung und damit für den Grund, weshalb überhaupt Valerian und Gallienus für einige Zeit in der niedergermanischen Metropole ihren Sitz genommen haben.

Mit Postumus kehrte dann etwas Ruhe ein, wenigstens teilweise. Freilich ist die Zeit extrem quellenarm. Aber es gibt einige Hinweise – und es sind die einzigen Überlieferungsfragmente überhaupt, die wir haben – die zeigen, daß es dennoch keine ruhige Zeit war, weder von außen noch von innen. Zum einen finden sich wiederum nicht wenige Münzschätze mit einem Schlußdatum von 268, nicht so sehr in der unmittelbaren Umgebung Kölns, sondern weiter im Westen (Karte 3).

Vor allem aber kennen wir nun eine Inschrift aus Gelduba, dem heutigen Krefeld. An dem Ort lag ein Auxiliarlager mit dem zugehörigen Kastellvicus. In einer diocletianischen Wiederaufbauphase des Kastells fand sich folgende Inschrift:[44]

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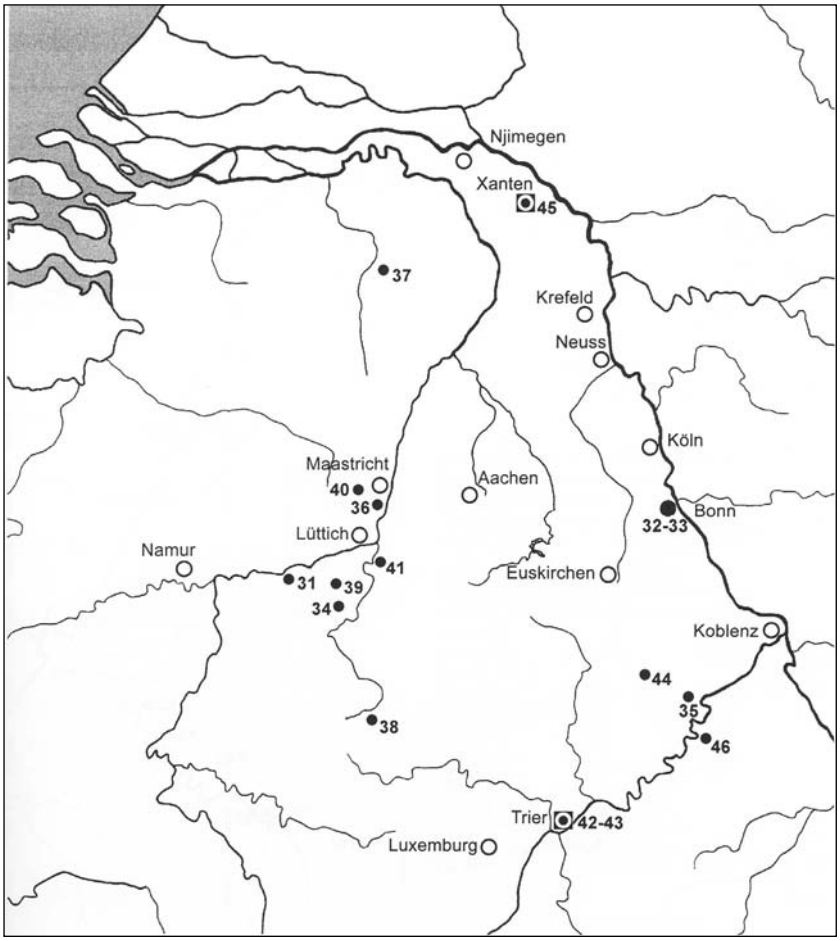
des Kastells Gelduba', in *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms* III, *13. Internationaler Limeskongress Aalen 1983* (Stuttgart 1986), 244 ff.; dies., ‚Die Gräberfelder', in H.G. Horn (Hg.), *Römer in Nordrhein-Westfalen* (Stuttgart 1986), 534 f.

[41] Eck 2004 (Anm. 34), 38 5 ff.; 433 ff.

[42] D. Haupt, ‚Römischer Töpfereibezirk bei Soller, Kreis Düren', *Rheinische Ausgrabungen* 23 (1984), 391 ff.; P. Rothenhöfer, Die Wirtschaftsstrukturen im südlichen Niedergermanien. *Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung eines Wirtschaftsraumes an der Peripherie des Imperium Romanum* (Rahden 2005), 135 ff.

[43] U. Back, 'Untersuchungen an der römischen Stadtmauer unter der Sakristei des Kölner Domes', *Kölner Jahrbuch* 23 (1990), 393 ff.

[44] W. Eck, ‚Postumus und das Grenzkastell Gelduba', in M.G. Angeli Bertinelli und A. Donati (Hg.) *Epigrafia di Confine – Confine dell'Epigrafia, Atti del Colloquio AIEGL, Borghesi 2003* (Faenza 2005), 140.



Karte 3.

Imp. Caesar [M. Cassianius]
Latiniu[s Postumus]
p.f. invictus Au[g. p.m., tr. pot. X?, cos. IIII?, p.p][45]
per prodit[ionem hostium]
publicorum ba[lineum vi incendi]
consumptum a [fundament(is) refecit]
d(edicat-) *vacat*
vacat

[45] Obwohl die Argumente für die konkreten Ziffern bei der *tribunicia potestas* und *cos*. sehr gewichtig sind, lassen sie sich natürlich hier nicht beweisen; deshalb stehen die Fragezeichen.

Diese Inschrift berichtet von der Wiederherstellung eines Bades durch Postumus bzw. in seinem Auftrag. Da die Inschrift nicht vollständig eingemeißelt, vielmehr, wie der eine Buchstabe am Anfang von Zeile 7 zeigt, mitten im Prozeß gestoppt wurde, kann man die Fertigstellung des Bades in die Schlussphase der Regierungszeit des Postumus setzen, also Anfang des Jahres 269. Das aber heißt dann, daß das Ereignis, das zur Zerstörung des Bades geführt hatte, vor 269 liegen muß. Dieses Ereignis wird als *proditio hostium publicorum* bezeichnet. Das kann sich also nicht auf auswärtige Feinde, etwa fränkische Stämme beziehen, sondern auf Feinde innerhalb des Reiches. Vielleicht handelte es sich um einen Aufstand von romanisierten gallisch-germanischen Bevölkerungsteilen, die sich bei der Revolte im Jahr 260 Postumus nur unter dem Zwang der Verhältnisse angeschlossen hatten. Im Jahr 265 schien Gallienus zunächst bei dem Versuch erfolgreich zu sein, die abgesplitterten Teile im Westen wieder zurück zu gewinnen. Es kam zu Gefechten, bei denen Postumus zeitweilig deutlich im Nachteil war.[46] Er wurde, wie es scheint, in einer Stadt Mittelgalliens eingeschlossen und von Gallienus belagert. Ob tatsächlich nach einiger Zeit eine Verwundung, die Gallienus bei der Belagerung erlitten haben soll, dazu führte, daß diese schließlich aufgegeben wurde, und Postumus sich unbehelligt nach dem Norden zurückziehen konnte, ist im Detail nicht zu verifizieren. Verlässlich scheint aber zu sein, daß Postumus für einige Zeit, und zwar im Jahr 265, in einer Situation war, die das Ende seiner Herrschaft wahrscheinlich machte. Münzen des Jahres 266 zeigen, daß Postumus erst damals verkündete, daß wieder Friede eingekehrt und die militärischen Unternehmungen durch die Vermittlung seiner Schutzgötter zu einem Ende gekommen seien.[47] In dieser Situation kam es offensichtlich auch im Norden, sozusagen im Herzland des Herrschaftsbereichs des Postumus zu einem Aufstand bzw. zu dem Versuch, sich wieder Gallienus und damit dem Gesamtreich anzuschließen. Vermutlich sind auch reguläre Truppen auf die Seite der Aufständischen gegen Postumus getreten. Als aber Gallienus doch nicht erfolgreich war, mußte der Aufstand zusammenbrechen, da der Rückhalt, den die Rebellen fanden, wohl zu gering war und vom Süden her nicht unterstützt wurde. Die

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[46] Zonaras 144, 19 ff.

[47] I. König, *Die gallischen Usurpatoren von Postumus bis Tetricus* (München 1981), 109 ff.; B. Bleckmann, *Die Reichskrise des III. Jahrhunderts in der spätantiken und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung* (München 1992), 248 ff.

Gegner aber wurden dann nach den gängigen politischen Mustern von Postumus und seinen Anhängern als *hostes publici* bezeichnet, als „Feinde des Gemeinwesens", und, falls sie nicht entkamen, wohl auch entsprechend behandelt.[48] Immerhin zeigt dieser zufällige Einblick in ein Ereignis im Innern des gallischen Sonderreichs, daß auch dieses Gebilde höchst instabil war, was einem der wesentlichen Ziele, die Postumus auch verfolgte, der Schutz gegen auswärtige Feinde, zuwiderlief. Diese Instabilität setzte sich sodann in beschleunigtem Tempo fort, als Postumus von seinen eigenen Truppen ermordet wurde, weil er sich im Gefolge eines weiteren Bürgerkrieges gegen die Plünderung von Mainz aussprach. Die Regionalkaiser Laelianus, Marius, Victorinus, Tetricus folgten im schnellen Rhythmus aufeinander. Die Münzen erreichten unter Victorinus einen Qualitätsverlust, der sonst nirgends zu finden war.[49] 274 kam durch Aurelian das Ende der Abspaltung, jedoch nicht die äußere Sicherheit. Die Einbrüche der Franken, denen nunmehr offensichtlich nur noch eine geschwächte Grenzverteidigung entgegenstand, führten so weit wie kaum je zuvor (Karte 4).

Ein Hinweis auf diesen Einfall, bei dem u. a. auch Xanten schwer getroffen wurde, ist wohl der Münzschatzfund von Brauweiler, dessen Schlußmünze ins Jahr 275 gehört.[50] Da ansonsten die Versorgung mit Münzgeld immer schlechter wurde, versuchte man durch Nachprägungen von Münzen, einer Art Notgeld, die Schwierigkeiten halbwegs zu lösen.[51] Das zeigt natürlich auch, daß nicht alles zusammenbrach, daß man auch nicht zur reinen Naturalwirtschaft zurückkehrte. Aber

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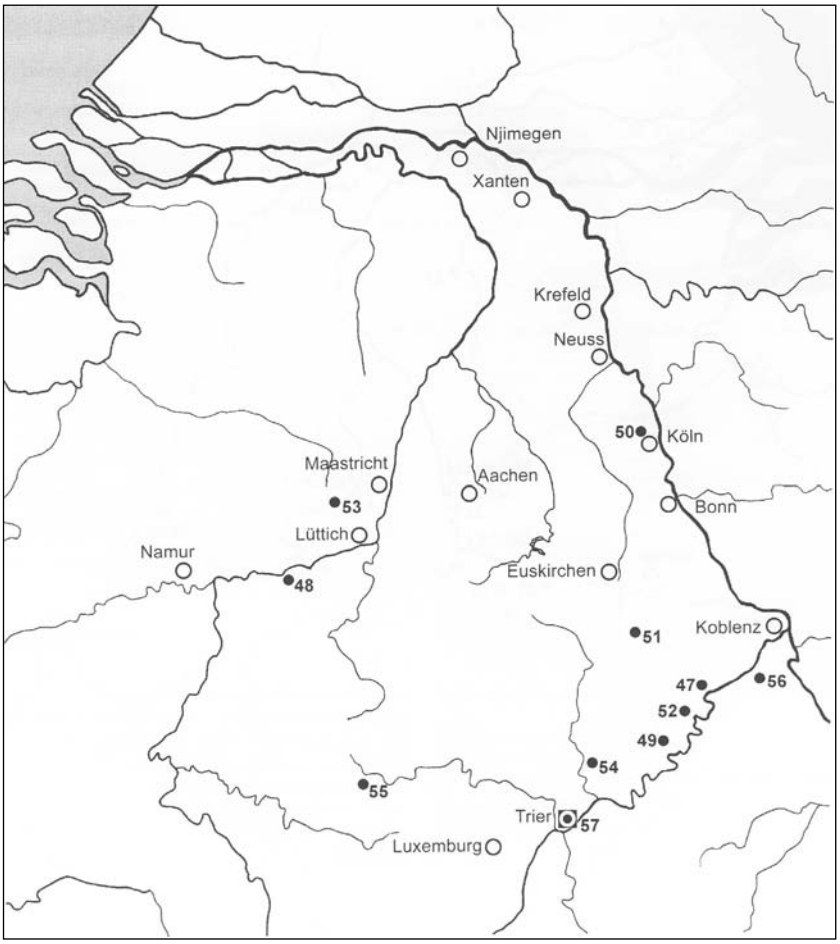
[48] Siehe z. B. die Formulierung *detectis insidiis hostium publicorum* für die Gegner des Septimius Severus in einer Inschrift aus Sicca Veneria (*ILS* 429); in der Laufbahn des L. Valerius Valerianus, die aus einer Inschrift aus Caesarea Maritima bekannt ist, wird dieser als *praepositus vexil(lationis) feliciss(imae) [expedit(ionis)] urbic(ae) itemq(ue) Asianae [adversus] hostes publicos* bezeichnet (*AE* 1966, no. 495 = C.M. Lehmann und K.G. Holum, *The Greek and Latin Inscriptions of Caesarea Maritima* [Boston 2000], Nr. 4).

[49] R. Ziegler, *Der Schatzfund von Brauweiler. Untersuchungen zur Münzprägung und zum Geldumlauf im gallischen Sonderreich* (Köln 1983), 33 ff. Zuletzt W. Weiser, ‚Zur Chronologie des Jahres 269 n. Chr. im Gallischen Sonderreich: Usurpation des Laelianus, Tod des Postumus, Episode des Marius und Regierungsantritt des Victorinus im Hochsommer/ Herbst 269', *Kölner Jahrbuch* 37 (2004), 495 ff.

[50] Ziegler 1983 (Anm. 49) 91 ff.

[51] W. Gaitzsch, B. Päffgen und W. Thoma, ‚Notgeld des späten 3. Jh. aus dem Hambacher Forst – Münzprägung in der villa rustica 206?', in H. Horn et al. (Hg.) *Ein Land macht Geschichte. Archäologie in Nordrhein-Westfalen* (Mainz 1995), 254 f.; H.-J. Schulzki, ‚Der Katastrophenhorizont der zweiten Hälfte des 3. Jahrhunderts auf dem Territorium der CCAA' *Kölner Jahrbuch* 34 (2001), 43 ff.



Karte 4.

man mußte sich auf einem niederen Niveau einrichten, mit der Krise zunächst noch leben.

Dennoch: die Krise war nicht alles, sie hatte auch nicht den Überlebenswillen aller zerstört, auch nicht die Möglichkeit zum Handeln. Nichts zeigt dies deutlicher als der Zufallsfund eines Meilensteines für Florianus nahe bei Köln.[52] Florianus war, wohl im Juli 276, nach dem Tod seines kaiserlichen Bruders Tacitus in Kleinasien zum Kaiser akkla-

[52] *CIL* 13, 9155 = 17. 2. 580.

miert worden. Nach knapp drei Monaten fand seine Herrschaft bereits ihr Ende, da er von seinen eigenen Soldaten in Tarsus in Kilikien (im Südosten der heutigen Türkei) ermordet wurde.[53] Die Nachricht von seiner Erhebung muß einige Wochen gebraucht haben, bis sie aus dem Osten den Rhein erreichte. Doch trotz aller militärischen Bedrohung und Unsicherheit hat der Statthalter der Provinz und die *colonia Agrippina* die Zeit gefunden, einen Meilenstein als Zeichen der Loyalität für den neuen Herrscher aufzustellen. Als der Stein fertig war, lebte der Kaiser vielleicht schon nicht mehr.[54] Doch als dies wiederum in Köln bekannt wurde, stand das steinerne Monument bereits an der Straße und kündete von der selbstverständlichen Loyalität einer Stadt für einen Kaiser, von dem die Bewohner Kölns nie etwas Näheres erfahren hatten.

So mischen sich einzelne Zeichen von anscheinender Normalität mit zahlreichen Hinweisen auf die Krisensituation. Die Menschen dachten sicher nicht an ein Ende des Reiches, noch nicht an das Ende der römischen Herrschaft. Daß dieser Grundzug, die Überzeugung von der Fortdauer Roms, für die Menschen des 3. und 4. Jahrhunderts fast konstitutiv war,[55] zeigt in unserer Gegend wohl nichts mehr als die Errichtung des Grabbaues, der heute in Köln als Teil der Kirche St. Gereon mehr als 1600 Jahre überlebt hat.[56] Er wurde außerhalb der Mauern des spätantiken Agrippina wohl ein oder zwei Jahrzehnte nach der ersten Eroberung Kölns durch die Franken im Jahr 355 errichtet. Diese Eroberung erschien als tief greifender Einschnitt in der Geschichte der Stadt. Dennoch ging zumindest derjenige, der den Bau des Grabmals anordnete, davon aus, daß es eine römische Zukunft geben würde. Krise bedeutete nicht das Ende. Daß das Ende der römischen Herrschaft schon drei Jahrzehnte später dennoch kam, hat wohl kaum jemand angenommen.[57]

Köln, Oktober 2006

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[53] Kienast 1996 (Anm. 1), 252. Vgl. auch E. Sauer, ‚M. Annius Florianus: Ein Drei-Monate-Kaiser und die ihm zu Ehren aufgestellten Steinmonumente (276 n. Chr.)‘, *Historia* 47 (1998), 174 ff.

[54] Ähnliches kann man bei einer Statuendedikation in Italica in der Baetica vermuten: *CIL* 2, 1115 = *ILS* 593.

[55] Siehe Eck 2004 (Anm. 34), 670.

[56] O. Schwab, ‘St. Gereon in Köln. Untersuchungen zum spätantiken Gründungsbau’, *Kölner Jahrbuch* 35 (2002), 7 ff.; U. Verstegen, *Ausgrabungen und Bauforschungen in St. Gereon zu Köln*, 2 Bände (Mainz am Rhein 2006).

[57] W. Eck, *Von Agrippina zu Colonia. Vom Überleben einer „Stadt“ am Rande des untergehenden römischen Reiches* (im Druck).

BRITAIN DURING THE THIRD CENTURY CRISIS

ANTHONY R. BIRLEY

Attention is given in what follows principally to the British provinces during the period traditionally described as that of the 'third century crisis', the years 235 to 285.[1] After the Severan expedition, which inflicted heavy losses on Rome's enemies in Scotland, even though Severus' aim, to annexe Caledonia, was given up by his sons, nothing is heard of trouble from the north for almost a century.[2] The frontier system established under Caracalla, once more based on Hadrian's Wall with its outposts, was lavishly praised by Richmond as innovative.[3] But his view was based on the doubtful premise that under Hadrian there had been no outposts along Dere Street, the road leading north from Corbridge, through the Wall, into Scotland. In the 1930s Richmond had excavated at the two Dere Street outpost forts, *Habitancum* (Risingham) and *Bremenium* (High Rochester) and stated simply, in each case, based on the absence of 'Hadrianic sherds', that there was no Hadrianic occupation. Yet no pottery report was published, and scepticism is justifable, given the very limited nature of his excavations.[4] It may well be that under Caracalla the original Hadrianic system was

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[1] For a survey of the frontier zone in the third century see R.F.J. Jones, 'Change on the frontier: northern Britain in the third century', in A. King and M. Henig (eds.), *The Roman West in the Third Century* (Oxford 1981), 393–414, naturally requiring some revision in the light of more recent archaeological evidence. This cannot be attempted in the present contribution, which concentrates on inscriptions and the limited literary sources.

[2] See at the end of this article for Constantius' dealings with the Picts. It may be noted here that F. Hunter, 'Rome and the creation of the Picts', in Z. Visy (ed.), *Limes XIX: Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies* (Pécs 2005), 235–244, takes a different view on the formation of the Picts from that offered e.g. by A.R. Birley, 'The frontier zone in Britain: Hadrian to Caracalla', in L. de Blois and E. Lo Cascio, *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 B.C.–A.D. 476)*, Impact of Empire 6 (Leiden and New York forthcoming), at nn. 55–59, where the model proposed by J.C. Mann, 'The northern frontier after A.D. 369', *Glasgow Archaeological Journal* 3 (1974), 34–42, is cited with approval. The 'Mann model' is criticised by Hunter.

[3] I.A. Richmond, 'The Romans in Redesdale', in *A History of Northumberland,* vol. 15 (Newcastle upon Tyne 1940), 63–159, especially 94–98.

[4] I.A. Richmond, 'Excavations at High Rochester and Risingham, 1935', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4th series, 13 (1936), 170–198, at 180, 194.

simply reintroduced. Of course, the garrisons now stationed in the outpost forts were no doubt better suited to long-distance patrolling than had been the case in the third century. A plausible restoration of an inscription from Corbridge allows the inference that the Dere Street line was called a *praetensio*.[5]

The division of Britain – surely by Caracalla, in 213 or soon afterwards[6] – left the northern province, Britannia Inferior, with only one legion, of which the legate now became governor, but with the majority of the British auxiliary regiments under his command. York was presumably given the status of *colonia* at this time: it had still been a *municipium* at the time of Severus' death in 211.[7] For reasons which are unknown, from an early date after the division troops from outside Britannia Inferior were stationed in that province. Detachments from the other two British legions, II Augusta and XX Valeria Victrix, both now in Britannia Superior, were at Carlisle under Caracalla or Elagabalus and at a western outpost beyond the Wall, Netherby, probably in A.D. 219.[8] Further, *beneficiarii* from Britannia Superior are attested in the Lower province (dating unknown).[9] Under Caracalla, legionaries from the Germanies were based at Piercebridge on the River Tees, in the hinterland of the Wall.[10]

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[5] M.P. Speidel, 'The Risingham *praetensio*', *Britannia* 29 (1998), 356–359, improving *RIB* 1.1152, Corbridge: *[…Ra]e(ti?) Ga[es. s(ub) Arru]ntio Paulin[o trib. cur. a]g. in praeten[sione]* and *RIB* 1.1229, Risingham: *[…] pro salute Arr(unti) Paulini Theodotus lib*. The date remains uncertain, either second or third century.

[6] As argued by A.R. Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain* (Oxford 2005), 333 ff.

[7] Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 20.27. See E. Birley, 'The Roman inscriptions of York', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 41 (1966), 726–734, at 727 (citing the view of J.C. Mann). York is first attested as a *colonia* by an inscription of A.D. 237, naming a man who was decurion in the *coloniae* of Eburacum and Lindum, both in Britannia Inferior, *AE* 1922, no. 116.

[8] M.W.C. Hassall and R.S.O. Tomlin, 'Inscriptions', *Britannia* 20 (1989) 331 ff., no. 4, Carlisle: *C[o]ncord[iae] leg. II Aug. et XX V.[V.…]*; no. 5, *ibid.*: *I. O. [M.] Iunon[i Reginae] Miner[vae Aug.] Marti P[atri Vic]toriae c[eteris diis daea[busque] omnibus [M. Aur.] M.f. Ulpia Syrio [Nico]poli ex [p]rov. Trh[ac.] trib. mil. leg. XX V.V. Antoninianae* (A.D. 212/213–222); *RIB* 1.980 + addendum (*RIB* I, with addenda and corrigenda by R.S.O. Tomlin (Stroud 1995)), Netherby: *Im[p. Caes. M. Aur.] Antoṇi[no] p. f. Ạug. b[i]s cos. vẹxil. leg. II Aug. et XX V. V. item coh. I Ael. Hisp. ∞ eq. sub cura M[o]d[i] Iuḷii, ḷeg. Aug. [pr.] pṛ. instante Ṭ. Ael. N[…, trib.?…]temp[lum…]* (A.D. 219?).

[9] *RIB* 1.745, Greta Bridge: *….ellinus bf. cos. provincie superior V S L L M*; *RIB* 1.1696, Chesterholm: *[…] Silvan. [M.] Aurelius Modestus bf. cos. provinciae super[i]or[i]s leg. II Aug.*

[10] *RIB* 1.1022, *[I] O M Dolychen[o] Iul. Valentin[us] ord. Ger. Su[p.] ex iussu ipsius posuit pro se et suis l.l.m. [Pr]aesente et Extricato II co[s.]* (A.D. 217); other, undated, inscriptions from Piercebridge probably belong to the same period: *RIB* 1.1026, *[D] M […G]racili [ord]inato [Ger]man. Super. [leg.] XXII Aurelia […]illa coniugi faciendum curavit*; *AE* 1967, no.

During the third century there seem to be increasing numbers of *cunei* and *numeri* (and similar units, for example *vexillationes*) in the frontier zone of Britannia Inferior, some of them manifestly more 'barbarian' in origin than the auxiliaries in *alae* and cohorts. The following table summarises the evidence:[11]

Caracalla (A.D. 213)	*Raeti Gaesati* and *Exploratores Habitancenses*	*RIB* 1.1235	Risingham
Severus Alexander	*numerus Hnaudifridi*	*RIB* 1.1576	Housesteads
Severus Alexander	*Germ(ani) cives Tuihanti*	*RIB* 1.1593	Housesteads
Severus Alexander	*cuneus Frisiorum Ver(covicianorum?)*	*RIB* 1.1594	Housesteads
Severus Alexander	*numerus [G]ẹr[man]orum*(?) or *Ṛ[isi]orum*(?),		Vindolanda[11]
Severus Alexander	*vexillatio Ma[ ]*	*RIB* 1.919; cf. 926 (undated)	Old Penrith
Gordian III	*numerus eqq. Sarm(atarum) Bremetenn(acensium)*	*RIB* 1.583; cf. *RIB* 1.594–595	Ribchester
	numerus Explorator. Brem(eniensium)	*RIB* 1.1262	High Rochester
	vexillatio Sueborum Lon(govicianorum)	*RIB* 1.1074	Lanchester
Philip	*cuneus Frisionum Aballavensium*	*RIB* 1.882–883	Papcastle
Valerian and Gallienus	*Numerus Maurorum Aur(elianorum)*	*RIB* 1.2042	Burgh-by-Sands
undated	*cuneus Fris(iorum) Vinovie(nsium)*	*RIB* 1.1036	Binchester
	cuneus . . .	*RIB* 1.772	Brougham
	eqq. LL	*RIB* 1.765	Brougham
	eq(uites) Sar(matae) (?)	*RIB* 2.4.2479	Catterick
	numerus Barc(ariorum)	*RIB* 1.601	Lancaster
	numerus Barcariorum Tigrisensium	*Notitia Dignitatum Occ.* XL 22	Arbeia (South Shields)
	numerus Con(cangensium?)	*RIB* 2.4.2480.1–2	Binchester
	numerus eq(uitum) [St]ratonicianorum	*RIB* 1.780	Brougham
	numerus M. S. S.	*RIB* 1.764	Kirkby Thore

259, *I O M Dolicheno pro salute vexil. leg. VI V. et exer. G(ermaniae) utriusq. c(uram) a(gente) M. Loll. Venatore 7 leg. II Aug. V S L M*; M.W.C. Hassall and R.S.O. Tomlin, 'Inscriptions', *Britannia* 17 (1986) 438 f., . . . *ex n[. . .] German. supe[r.]*. Note also *RIB* 1.747, Greta Bridge, not far south of Piercebridge, a now lost inscription; after reference to building work under a centurion of the Lower British legion VI Victrix, there is mention of *[. . . su]perioris*. This is restored in *RIB* as *[Britanniae su]perioris*, but *[Germaniae su]perioris* is also possible.

[11] A.R. Birley, 'The inscription', in R. Birley et al., *The 1998 excavations at Vindolanda. The Praetorium Site. Interim Report* (Vindolanda 1999), 29–35; R.S.O. Tomlin and M.W.C. Hassall, 'Inscriptions', *Britannia* 34 (2003) 366–367, no. 8, offered only a partial reading of this badly weathered altar.

(*cont.*)

venatores Banniess(es)	*RIB* 1.1905	Birdoswald
vexillatio Germa[no]r. V[o]r[e]d(ensium	*RIB* 1.920	Old Penrith
numerus Exploratorum		Netherby, *Castra Exploratorum*
Raeti Gaesati	*RIB* 1.1152	Corbridge[12]
	RIB 1.1216; 1217	Risingham
	RIB 1.1724	Greatchesters
	RIB 1.2117	Jedburgh

Further, a stray reference in a literary source refers to barbarian troops being sent to the island by Probus: "Such of them [Burgundians and Vandals] as he [Probus] could capture alive, he sent to Britain." This was at the end of Probus' Raetian campaign of 278.[13] As with the despatch of 5,500 Sarmatians to Britain by Marcus Aurelius in 175,[14] the intention was probably, not least, to put these men a safe distance from their homeland. They were, however, shortly afterwards able to help to suppress an attempted coup (see below).

In spite of this evidence for the garrison of Britain being reinforced, the general impression is that Roman Britain was relatively peaceful during the crisis years. A distant echo of events of the year 238 may be noticed in Britain. The aged proconsul of Africa, M. Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus, on whom the purple was thrust at Thysdrus in that year, had evidently been governor of Britannia Inferior over twenty years earlier. His names were totally deleted on an inscription of A.D. 216 at High Rochester. Another stone of the same year at Chester-le-Street was simply broken in half and discarded, allowing *[M. Antoni Gor]diani* to be restored. On a third stone, at Ribchester, a dedication for Caracalla and his mother, *M. Antoni Gordiani* was deleted, but *Se(m)pr[oniani Romani]* untouched. Further, it may not be fanciful to suppose that a prefect of cavalry in the British frontier zone, serving under Gordian III, took pride in proclaiming that he was from Thysdrus –

[12] M.P. Speidel, op. cit. (n. 5).

[13] Zosimus 1.68.3. For the date, see G. Kreucher, *Der Kaiser Marcus Aurelius Probus und seine Zeit* (Stuttgart 2003), 145 f.

[14] Dio Cassius 71.16.2.

because his home town had in effect launched the dynasty: *Aemilius Crispinus pr(a)ef. eqq., natus in pro(vincia) Africa de Tusdro* (Old Carlisle).[15]

There is also evidence for troops being sent from Britain to other provinces. The *Brittones* attested at Walldürn in A.D. 232 could, of course, have been Caledonians captured long before, during the Severan expedition of 208–211, and sent to Germany by Caracalla.[16] But it is intriguing to note the dedication at Colchester to Mars and 'the Victory of Severus Alexander', made by a Caledonian.[17] As pressure on the Rhine and Danube increased in the mid-third century, it is no surprise to find reinforcements sent there from Britain. In A.D. 255, men from the Twentieth legion made a dedication at Mainz, on returning from an expedition: *[milites] leg. XX pro sal. canabe(nsium) ex v[o]to pos[uerunt] regr(essi) [ad] can[ab(as) ab expedit]ione VI Kal(endas) [...Vale]riano III et G[allieno cos.*[18] A little later, British legionaries are attested at Sirmium: *[I. o.] m. monitori [p]ro salute adque incolumitate d. n. Gallieni Aug. et militum vexill. legg. [G]ermaniciana[r. e]t Britannici(a)n. [cu]m auxilis [e]arum...[V]i talianus [pro]tect. Aug. n. [somnio mon]itus, [praepo]situs, [v(otum)?] p(osuit).*[19] No British legions are on Gallienus' legionary coin-issues, which were perhaps struck after the men at Mainz returned to Britain. The men at Sirmium, evidently under Gallienus as sole emperor (A.D. 260–268), could hardly have joined Postumus' empire but were perhaps absorbed into other units. Another piece of evidence for detachments from British legions serving on the continent is the 'officer's badge', of unknown provenance, depicting two groups of five legionaries, facing one another, labelled *leg. XX V.V.* and *leg. secunda Augus(ta)*, with the name *Aurelius Cervianus* between them.[20]

Britain evidently formed part of the Gallic empire from start to finish. Postumus' control over the British provinces, at latest from A.D. 261, is attested by an inscription from Lancaster *[..., ob] balineum refect.*

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[15] High Rochester: *RIB* 1.1279; Chester-le-Street: *RIB* 1.1049; Ribchester: *RIB* 1.590; Old Carlisle: *RIB* 1.897.

[16] *CIL* 13.6592 = *ILS* 9184, Walldürn: *deae Fortuna[e] sanctae balineu[m] vetustate conlapsum expl. Stu.. et Brit. gentiles [et?] officiales Brit. deditic. [[Alexandrianorum]] de suo restituer., cura agente T. Fl. Romano > leg. XXIII P.p.f. id. Aug. Lupo et Maximo cos.* (A.D. 232): a much discussed text, mainly because of *deditic.*

[17] *RIB* 1.191, Colchester: *deo Marti Medocio Campesium et Victorie Alexandri pii felicis Augusti nos(tr)i donum Lossio Veda de suo posuit nepos Vepogeni Caledo.*

[18] *CIL* 13.6780 = A. v. Domaszewski, *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift* 18 (1899), 218 f.

[19] *CIL* 3.3228 = *ILS* 546.

[20] Now in the Cabinet des Medailles (Paris), *RIB* 2.3.2427.26*.

[et] basilicam vetustate conlapsum (sic) *a solo restitutam eqq. alae Sebosianae [[[Po]s[t]u[mi]anae]], sub Octavio Sabino, v. c. praeside n., curante Fla. Ammausio, praef. eqq., d(e)d. XI Kal. Septem., Censore II et Lepido II cos.*[21] As Dessau first pointed out and as was confirmed by the reading of the deleted title *[[[Po]s[t]u[mi]anae]]*, the consuls Censor and Lepidus must have held office in the Gallic Empire;[22] the year will be between A.D. 263 and 268.[23] Postumus evidently continued to appoint senators to govern military provinces, with command over the army, after Gallienus, against whom he had seceded, had either replaced them by equestrian *praesides* or, at least, the legionary commanders by equestrian prefects.[24] On two inscriptions from Birdoswald the regiment in garrison likewise has the title *Postumiana*.[25] Postumus is named on four British milestones.[26]

Postumus' coins with reverses NEPT COMITI and NEPTVNO REDVCI may, as Mann conjectured, indicate that he conducted "successful operations in the North Sea".[27] But Drinkwater suggests that Postumus went to Britain just to secure the island's allegiance.[28] Victorinus' rule (A.D. 269–271) is attested by five milestones.[29] One may also note a stamped tile from Caerleon, *[leg. II A]ug. Vi(ctoriniana?)*, and others from Chester, *leg. XX V.V. V(ictoriniana?)*.[30] The Twentieth is the only British legion commemorated on Victorinus' coins.[31] Tetricus (A.D. 271–274) is represented in Britain by the title *Tetriciana* for the Birdoswald regiment and by three milestones from Bitterne.[32] After

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[21] *RIB* 1.605+addendum addendum (*RIB* I, with addenda and corrigenda by R.S.O. Tomlin (Stroud 1995)).

[22] H. Dessau, 'Le consulat sous les empereurs des Gaules', *Mélanges Boissier* (Paris 1903), 165 ff.

[23] J. Lafaurie, *ANRW* 2.2 (1975), 907, shows that Postumus was himself *cos. II* in 261, *cos. III* in 262, *cos. IV* in 267 or 268, and *cos. V* in 269. This leaves one of the years 263–266 or 267–268 for Censor and Lepidus.

[24] Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 33.34. See M. Christol, *Essai sur l'évolution des carrières sénatoriales dans la second moitié du IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.* (Paris 1986), 38 ff.; A. Chastagnol, *Le Sénat romain à l'époque impériale* (Paris 1992), 201 ff.

[25] *RIB* 1.1883 and 1.1886.

[26] *RIB* 1.2232, Cornwall; *RIB* 1.2255, S. Wales; *RIB* 1.2260, Carmarthenshire; *Journal of Roman Studies* 55 (1965), 224, Cumbria.

[27] *RIC* 5.2, Postumus, nos. 30, 76, 214–217; J.C. Mann, 'The historical development of the Saxon Shore', in V. Maxfield (ed.), *The Saxon Shore. A Handbook* (Exeter 1989), 1–11, at 5.

[28] J.F. Drinkwater, *The Gallic Empire* (Stuttgart 1987), 168 f.

[29] *RIB* 1.2238, Chesterton, Camb.; *RIB* 1.2241, Lincoln; *RIB* 1.2251, near Neath; *RIB* 1.2261, near Brecon; *RIB* 1.2287, near Old Penrith; *RIB* 1.2296, Corbridge.

[30] Caerleon: *RIB* 2.4.2459.64; Chester: *RIB* 2.4.2463.56–57.

[31] *RIC* 5.2, Victorinus, nos. 21–22.

[32] *Tetriciana*: *RIB* 1.1185; milestones from Bitterne: *RIB* 1.2224–2226.

Aurelian suppressed the *imperium Galliarum* in 274, he was recognised at both ends of Britain.[33]

There was an attempted coup in Britain under Probus, of which the fullest account is preserved by Zonaras:

> And another man, in the Britains, whom the Emperor had appointed governor, carried out a rebellion, Victorinus, a Moor, who was a friend of his [*or*: was related to him], having obtained this position for him. And Probus, learning this, blamed Victorinus, who asked to be sent against that man. Victorinus set off, pretending to be fleeing from the Emperor, and was gladly received by the usurper, whom he destroyed during the night, and returned to Probus.[34]

This version is repeated by Georgius Cedrenus and Leo Grammaticus, who offer a few further details about Victorinus' subsequent reception by Probus on his return from Britain.[35]

Zosimus refers to the coup attempt twice, first with a briefer version of the story in Zonaras, Georgius Cedrenus and Leo. His second mention shows that his main account is out of chronological order:[36] the prisoners (Burgundians and Vandals) sent to Britain (cf. above) "later helped to suppress a certain insurgent there"; they had been captured at the end of Probus' Raetian campaign in A.D. 278.[37] Hence the coup attempt was probably a year or two later.[38] Victorinus might be the *cos. ord*. 282 of that name, colleague of Probus when the latter was *cos. V*. If so, his consulship might be a reward for suppressing the usurper, which would suggest that the action took place in 280 or 281.[39] The governor was no doubt an equestrian *praeses*. His province was almost certainly Britannia Superior, which had two legions and was nearer to the

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[33] *RIB* 1.2227, Bitterne and *RIB* 1.2309, near Carvoran. But Aurelian did not, as has been claimed, take the title *Britannicus maximus*: see the improved reading of *P.Lips*. 1.119, by E. Kettenhofen, *Tyche* 1 (1986), 138 ff.

[34] Zonaras 12.29 (III 155, 1–12 Dindorf).

[35] Georgius Cedrenus, *Compendium Historiarum* 1.463.15–464.3 in *Corpus Historum Historiae Byzantinae* (Bonn 1838–1839) and Leo Grammaticus, *Chronographia* (Bonn 1842), 80 ll. 11–16.

[36] Zosimus 1.66.2 and 1.68.2; F. Paschoud, *Zosime, Histoire Nouvelle, Livres I et II* (Paris 2000²), 181 f., n. 95.

[37] For the date, see n. 13 above.

[38] Paschoud 2000², op. cit. (n. 36), 183 f., n. 97.

[39] In that case, the story in Georgius Cedrenus and Leo, that, after accomplishing his mission, Victorinus asked "no longer to have any command" and retired, would not be strictly accurate. Still, the consulship was hardly a command. This man is often identified with Pomponius Victorianus, prefect of Rome in 282, e.g. *PLRE* I, Victori(a)nus 3; *PIR*² P 762.

continent than the one-legion Britannia Inferior. Various motives have been suggested for the rebellion, including external attack: Kreucher conjectures that its cause was a threat from the sea, "im besonderen aber eine Durchbrechung des Hadrianswalls im Norden", citing British coin-hoards.[40] This must remain speculation.

The Latin sources based on the *Kaisergeschichte* all ignore this rebel.[41] Instead, they concentrate on the usurpation of Proculus and Bonosus on the Rhine. The *Historia Augusta* embroiders this at length, claiming that these two gained control of "all the Britains, Spains, and provinces of trousered Gaul", and even that Bonosus' father was a professor of British origin. Both items are surely fiction. Further, whereas the other Latin sources report Probus' vine edict of A.D. 282 as allowing "the Gauls and Pannonians" to plant vines, the *Historia Augusta* has him granting this to "all the Gauls, Spaniards, and Britons", probably another invention.[42]

Carinus, who ruled in the west from A.D. 283–285, took the title *Britannicus maximus* in 284, a title shared by his brother and colleague Numerian.[43] This should indicate that Carinus, or at least an officer sent by him, campaigned with success in Britain. It has been suggested that the contemporary poet Nemesianus referred to such a victory with the words *nec taceam, primum quae nuper bella sub Arcto felici, Carine, manu confeceris*.[44] Diocletian, called *Britannicus maximus* soon after defeating Carinus in A.D. 285, probably just took over the title; but perhaps campaigning continued.

Datable building inscriptions disappear between the Gallic empire and the tetrarchy. It is worth mentioning a few undated inscriptions which probably belong to the third century and show some signs of

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[40] Thus G. Kreucher, op. cit. (n. 13), 165, who cites a great many British coin hoards from this time as evidence for insecurity. He also conjectures, on page 203, that the governor of Britannia Prima, L. Septimius [...] (*RIB* 1.103, Cirencester) might have been the rebel, following for the date A.R. Birley, *Fasti of Roman Britain* (Oxford 1981), 177 ff., where this man was assigned to the period 274–286, and taken to be an equestrian *praeses* of Britannia Superior. But this suggestion is now withdrawn, see Birley 2005 op. cit. (n. 6), 426 f., assigning the inscription to the time of Julian.

[41] See the comments by F. Paschoud, *Histoire Auguste* V.2, *Vies de Probus*... (Paris 2002), 131 f., 135 f., on *Historia Augusta, Probus* 18.4–7.

[42] Control: *Historia Augusta, Probus* 18.5; Bonosus' father: *Historia Augusta, Quadrigae Tyrannorum* 14.1; Vine edict: *Historia Augusta, Probus* 18.8; See Paschoud 2002, op. cit. (n. 41), 131 ff.

[43] *CIL* 14.126 (= *ILS* 608), 127, near Ostia.

[44] Nemesianus, *Cynegetica* 69 f.; Mann, op. cit. (n. 27), 5.

local crisis. A tombstone at Ambleside, the fort at the northern end of Lake Windermere, commemorates a hostile attack: *D(is) B(onis?) M(anibus) Fla(vius) Fuscinus eme(ritus) ex ordi(nato) visi(t) an(n)is LV; D(is) B(onis?) M(anibus) Fla(vius) Romanus act(arius) vixit anni(s) XXXV, in cas(tello) inte(rfecti) ab hosti(bus)*.[45] At the outpost fort of Risingam, a tombstone registers the death of a young man who was *decep[tus]*, perhaps caught in an ambush: *[...]s decep[tus...] ann. XXII [a.d....] Kal. Iun. [...inte]reṿit(?) iṃ[p....]o it(erum) cos. [h.]f.c. [A]ureḷius Vict[or] avunculu[s]*. In *RIB* the consular date is restored as *iṃ[p. Prob]o it(erum) cos.*, i.e. the year 278. This seems quite arbitrary: one could just as easily restore *iṃ[p. Deci]o it(erum) cos.* (250), *iṃ[p. Gall]o it(erum) cos.* (252), *iṃ[p. Car]o it(erum) cos.* (283) or even *iṃ[p. Carin]o it(erum) cos.* (284). This need have been no more than a minor local incident.[46]

In this brief survey it has not been possible to go into detail on two major developments in the period, for which the evidence is principally archaeological: the building of town walls, which is generally thought to have begun earlier, but was probably taken much further during these years;[47] and the creation of a new defensive system along the eastern and southern coasts, which was later to become the *litus Saxonicum*. Two of the forts in that system, Brancaster and Reculver, were evidently in existence before the mid-third century.[48] For some time, the *communis opinio* has been that most of these forts were built under Probus.[49] They were certainly garrisoned under Carausius, and one, Pevensey, was evidently built under Allectus.[50]

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[45] *Journal of Roman Studies* 53 (1963), 160 no. 4, where *inte(rfectus)* is restored. It is possible and seems plausible to restore *inte(rfecti)*. For recent discussion, see J. Thorley, 'The Ambleside Roman gravestone', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society* 3rd series 2 (2002), 51–58; D.C.A. Shotter, 'The murder of Flavius Romanus at Ambleside: a possible context', *ibidem* 3 (2003), 228–231 (the latter suggesting conflict between supporters of Postumus and Gallienus).

[46] *RIB* 1.1255; Of the two, only the Ambleside inscription is included in the useful catalogue given by M. Reuter, 'Gefallen für Rom. Beobachtungen an den Grabinschriften im Kampf getöteter römischer Soldaten', in Z. Visy (ed.), *Limes XIX, Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies* (Pécs 2005), 255–263, at 259–263.

[47] S.S. Frere, 'The south gate and defences of *Venta Icenorum*: Professor Atkinson's excavations, 1930 and 1934', *Britannia* 36 (2005), 311–327, shows that large-scale destruction took place at this town in the 260s or 270s, followed by the building of new defences which enclosed a much smaller area.

[48] M.G. Jarrett, 'Non-legionary troops in Roman Britain: part one, the units', *Britannia* 25 (1994), 35–77, at 52, 54.

[49] S. Johnson, *The Roman Forts of the Saxon Shore* (London 1979), 104; S.S. Frere, *Britannia* (London 1987[3]), 329.

[50] Birley 2005, op. cit. (n. 6), 384, with further references.

Carausius' usurpation, from A.D. 286 to 293, and that of Allectus, from A.D. 293 to 296, are not discussed here.[51] They took place after the period of crisis (as traditionally defined) had ended, at least in the rest of the empire, with Diocletian's accession. The official interpretation of the reconquest by Constantius I is clearly illustrated by the gold medallion from the mint of Trier, found with other medallions, coins and jewellery at Arras. On the obverse is the laureate and cuirassed bust of FL(AVIVS) VAL(ERIVS) CONSTANTIVS NOBILISSIMVS C(AESAR). The reverse has the legend REDDITOR LVCIS AETERNAE, "restorer of the eternal light". Constantius is shown mounted, approaching the gate of a city, identified as London by the letters LON below a kneeling figure with arms raised in welcome, the city-goddess, while alongside a galley represents his fleet.[52] In fact, Britain may have been quite prosperous during the rule of the two usurpers and, indeed, during most of the third century. The island was to a large extent spared from the ravages of repeated invasion and civil war which affected much of the rest of the empire.[53]

How long Constantius remained in Britain is unknown. If, as seems likely, the campaign of reconquest was relatively early in the year, he may have stayed for several months. He would have needed to replace most of Allectus' subordinates; and it seems likely that it was now that the British provinces were further subdivided on the same lines as the rest of the empire. It may be that he also needed to inspect the northern frontier. According to his Panegyrist, Britain "has been recovered by you so completely that even those peoples adjacent to the frontiers of that island (*terminis eiusdem insulae cohaerentes*) obey your commands".[54] Perhaps Allectus had weakened the garrison, giving the Picts the opportunity to invade and create some damage.[55] Constan-

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[51] See e.g. Birley 2005, op. cit. (n. 6), 371–393, for a recent discussion of the two 'British emperors', with full citation of the sources.

[52] *RIC* 6, Treveri no. 34; ibidem nos. 32–33 also refer to the reconquest, one with the legend PIETAS AVGG showing Constantius crowned by Victory and restoring Britannia, and one with obverse showing him as consul, which must belong to A.D. 296, when he was *cos. II*.

[53] But the notion that there was a 'flight of capital' from Gaul to Britain, with wealthy landowners taking refuge from the invasions, is mistaken, as shown e.g. by M. Todd, *Roman Britain 55 B.C.–A.D. 400* (London 1981), 197 f.

[54] *Panegyrici Latini* 8[5].20.4.

[55] Thus Frere 1987³, op. cit. (n. 49), 332, noting evidence for some destruction; with 348, nn. 12 (citing the passage from panegyrist quoted above as implying a campaign in 296) and 14 (for destruction).

tius' victory was commemorated by all the tetrarchs taking the title *Britannicus maximus*, which is not in fact attested until 301.[56] Although Allectus was portrayed as a barbarian, some kind of victory against an unambiguously external enemy, such as the Picts, would have made the title completely acceptable.

However this may be, in his last campaign Constantius certainly did confront the Picts. He became Augustus in May 305 and in that year crossed to Britain from Boulogne, where he was joined by his eldest son Constantine, who campaigned with him against the Picts. The fullest account is given by the Panegyrist of 310, who refers to Constantius' final expedition, on which "he did not deign to annexe the forests and marshes of the Caledonians and other Picts".[57] He clearly claimed a victory in A.D. 305, since he had taken the title *Britannicus maximus II* by 7 January 306.[58] A brooch celebrating Diocletian's *vicennalia* (20 November 303), found in SW Scotland, inscribed *Iovi(i) Aug(usti) vot(is) XX, Fortu[nati?]*, might have been lost by an officer called Fortu[natus] serving under Constantius on this campaign, presumably directed against the Picts.[59] The northern peoples are referred to in a work compiled about the year 314, the *Laterculus Veronensis: gentes barbarae, quae pullulaverunt sub imperatoribus. Scoti, Picti, Calidoni*.[60] One may also note a gaming tower (*Spielturm*) found in the Rhineland, with the inscription: *utere felix vivas/ Pictos victos/ hostis deleta/ ludite securi.*[61]

Vindolanda, September 2006

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[56] *AE* 1973, no. 526a (the Coin Edict, A.D. 301, before 1 September); *ILS* 642 (preamble to the Price Edict, late November to early December 301); see T.D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge MA 1982), 17 ff.

[57] *Panegyrici Latini* 6(7).7.2

[58] As shown by *AE* 1961, no. 240, a diploma, reproduced as *RMD* I 78.

[59] *RIB* 2.1.2421.43, Erickstanebrae, Dumfries and Galloway.

[60] *Laterculus Veronensis* 13.1–4.

[61] *AE* 1989, no. 562, Froitzheim. Cf. *ILS* 8626a, Rome: *Parthi occisi/ Br[i]tt[o] victus/ ludit[e/ R]omani*.

LA CRISE DE 238 EN AFRIQUE ET SES IMPACTS SUR L'EMPIRE ROMAIN

Arbia Hilali

A partir de l'année 235, des difficultés croissantes marquent l'Empire romain et l'on voit se dessiner les premiers signes de la crise à venir[1]. Une longue série d'usurpations et de guerres civiles menace l'intégrité de l'Empire. L'année 238, ou «l'année des sept empereurs[2]», a connu l'usurpation des Gordiens dans la ville de Thysdrus en Afrique proconsulaire[3]. L'originalité de cette usurpation tient à ce qu'elle se produit dans une province romaine, traditionnellement confiée à un sénateur de haut rang. Autre particularité, ce n'est pas une mutinerie qui entraîne la chute de l'empereur en place, Maximin le Thrace, mais un mouvement purement civil à l'origine. Les événements de 238 témoignent essentiellement d'un pouvoir impérial confronté à assurer sa propre légitimité. La crise politique prend naissance à partir du moment où diverses institutions politiques revendiquent la détention de la légitimité impériale.

De la révolte fiscale à l'usurpation des Gordiens

L'origine de cette grande crise politique se trouve dans la ville de Thysdrus, l'une des villes les plus prospères d'Afrique du Nord[4]. Celle-ci connaît, à partir du IIe siècle, une expansion considérable, grâce

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[1] P. Veyne, *L'Empire gréco-romain* (Paris 2005), 21. De 235 à 282, on vit se succéder dix-sept empereurs, dont quatorze moururent assassinés, et une quarantaine d'usurpateurs.

[2] X. Loriot et D. Nony, *La crise de l'Empire romain, 235–238* (Paris 1997), 29.

[3] M. Christol, *L'Empire romain du IIIe siècle: Histoire politique (de 192, mort de Commode, à 325, concile de Nicée)* (Paris 1997), 91. L'Empire romain aurait connu quatre mois de crise politique intense de janvier 238 (Hérodien 7.4.1) au 9 mai 238 (la découverte d'une inscription de la province d'Arabie, indiquant l'établissement du pouvoir de Gordien dès 27 mai en ce lieu éloigné du cœur de l'Empire, oblige à resserrer encore plus le film des événements).

[4] J. Gascou, *La politique municipale de l'Empire romain en Afrique proconsulaire de Trajan à Septime-Sévère* (Rome 1972), 192–194.

à la culture de l'olivier[5]. Les grands domaines impériaux, mais aussi sénatoriaux sont très présents dans la région[6]. Étant donné sa richesse et la proximité de l'Italie, l'Afrique constituait de longue date l'une des sources principales de l'approvisionnement de Rome en blé et en huile. En outre, depuis la réorganisation par Septime Sévère de l'*annona militaris*, le ravitaillement de l'armée romaine dépendait pour une large part des paysans africains. Ces considérations et singulièrement la seconde expliquent que Maximin s'est tout particulièrement intéressé à l'Afrique. De nombreux milliaires à son nom y ont été retrouvés[7], et il n'est pas indifférent de constater que ces bornes, presque toutes datées de l'année 237, appartiennent pour la plupart soit à la grande voie militaire joignant Carthage à Lambèse, soit aux routes desservant les ports de la Byzacène (Hadrumetum, Tacapae), par où étaient exportés les produits de l'annone[8]. Thysdrus était un nœud routier important, centre d'une riche région de culture de l'olivier et siège d'un marché agricole très actif[9]. Cette ville connaissait alors une éclatante prospérité, dont témoignent encore aujourd'hui les mosaïques des riches demeures et les ruines colossales de son amphithéâtre[10].

Un conflit entre les propriétaires fonciers de la région et le fisc tourna mal et se termina par le massacre du procurateur et de ceux qui l'escortaient. Cet incident témoigne d'un mécontentement à l'égard de l'administration impériale et de sa politique fiscale, particulièrement dure au cours de l'année 237, alors que se préparait la grande expédition germanique prévue pour le printemps suivant[11]. Pour la première fois

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[5] H. Camps Fabrer, *L'olivier et l'huile dans l'Afrique romaine* (Alger 1953); H. Slim, «Les facteurs de l'épanouissement économique de Thysdrus», *Les cahiers de Tunisie* 8 (1960), 51–56.

[6] Elle comptait parmi ses citoyens plusieurs chevaliers romains: *RIB* 1.897 = *ILS* 502, datait de 242; *CIL* 12.686 = *ILS* 2911, datait de 244–249.

[7] La liste a été dressée par G. M. Bersanetti, *Studi sull'imperatore Massimino il Trace,* (Roma 1965), 27–30 et complétée depuis par P. Romanelli, *Storia delle province romane dell' Africa*, (Rome 1959), 447–448; X. Loriot, «Les premières années de la grande crise du IIIe siècle: De l'avènement de Maximin le Thrace (235) à la mort de Gordien III (244)», *ANRW* 2.2, 659–787, à 681, n. 193.

[8] T. Kotula, «L'insurrection des Gordiens et l'Afrique romaine», *EOS* 50,1 (1959–1960), 200 + n. 12. Parmi les routes réparées en 237 figurent celle de Capsa à Tacapae (*ILAfr* 654), de Sufetula à Hadrumetum (*ILAfr* 661) et d'Oea à Lepcis Magna (*IRT* 924–925).

[9] Mercure était le Génie de la colonie; *CIL* 8.22845.

[10] A. Lezine, «Notes sur l'amphithéâtre de Thysdrus», *Les cahiers de Tunisie* 8 (1960), 29–56; H. Slim, «Chefs d'œuvre du musée d'El Jem», in A. Ben Khader, É. de Balanda et A.U. Echeverría, *Image de pierre: la Tunisie en mosaïque* (Paris 2003), 107–113.

[11] Hérodien 7.3.2–5; 7.4.2. (d'après la traduction de D. Roques, Hérodien, *Histoire des empereurs romains*, (Paris 1990); X. Loriot, op. cit. (n. 7), 681. L'étude de la répar-

peut-être, les exactions fiscales ne frappaient pas seulement les milieux de la classe possédante sénatoriale ou équestre, mais aussi les notables de l'*ordo decurionum* des provinces[12]. A partir de ce moment la révolte fiscale se transforma en une usurpation et la révolte des Gordiens prit naissance[13]. La foule révoltée sollicita le proconsul d'Afrique, Gordien Ier, qui se trouvait alors à Thysdrus, pour qu'il prenne la tête de la révolte. A Carthage, l'entrée des nouveaux empereurs, Gordien Ier (70 ans) et son fils Gordien II (46 ans) suivit le rituel de l'*adventus* impérial[14]. Le peuple de la capitale africaine s'identifia ainsi au peuple de Rome en tant que porteur de la légitimité impériale. La province d'Afrique accueillit avec enthousiasme ce nouvel empereur. Hérodien écrit que, pendant quelques jours, Carthage eut le bonheur de se sentir l'égale de Rome[15]. La guerre civile qui avait commencé en Afrique s'étendit à l'Italie. Le peuple de Rome se livra à ce qu'Hérodien appelle « des actes de guerre civile[16] ».

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tition géographique des bornes milliaires où figure le nom de Maximin révèle qu'un grand nombre provient d'Afrique (68), de Proconsulaire (35), de Numidie (20) et de la Césarienne (13). Si P. Salama, *Les voies romaines de l'Afrique du Nord* (Alger 1951), 71–75 incline à y voir une manifestation de propagande impériale ; Kotula, op. cit. (n. 8), 200 suppose, que l'intérêt de Maximin pour ces provinces se justifiait par leur importance pour le ravitaillement de l'armée.

[12] Hérodien 7.3.3 : « Chaque jour on pouvait voir des personnages, la veille encore très riches, réduits le lendemain à la mendicité : si grande était l'avidité de ce régime tyrannique, qui s'abritait derrière la nécessité de distribuer d'abondantes largesses aux troupes ». Loriot, op. cit. (n. 7), 683 ; F. Jacques, « Humbles et notables, la place des *humiliores* dans les collèges de jeunes et leur rôle dans la révolte africaine de 238 », *Antiquités Africaines* 15 (1980), 217–230. La révolte de Thysdrus est une réponse à la politique de nivellement de Maximin, soucieuse de briser la puissance des notables des cités. Cette région riche a aussi souffert de la politique fiscale durant des périodes difficiles à l'époque moderne et s'est révoltée. B. Slama, « L'insurrection de1864 dans le Sahel », *Les cahiers de Tunisie*, 8 (1960), 109–136.

[13] Hérodien 7.4.2 : « Enfin, au terme de sa troisième année, les Libyens (…) prirent les premiers les armes et s'engagèrent résolument dans la rébellion ».

[14] S. Benoist, *Rome, le prince et la cité* (Paris 2005).

[15] Hérodien 7.6.2 : « Toute la pompe impériale entourait le nouvel empereur : il était accompagné des soldats qui se trouvaient dans la ville ainsi que des jeunes gens les plus corpulents de la cité, qui l'escortaient à l'exemple des prétoriens de Rome ; ses faisceaux étaient ornés de lauriers, signe par lequel on distingue les faisceaux impériaux des faisceaux ordinaires ; enfin on portait des flambeaux de cérémonie devant lui. Ainsi, pendant quelques temps, Carthage eut l'aspect et la bonne fortune de Rome, dont elle fut, pour ainsi dire, l'image. »

[16] Hérodien 7.7.4. Les principales victimes de ces premières manifestations furent les hauts fonctionnaires qu'avait nommés Maximin : le préfet du prétoire Vitalianus (Hérodien 7.6.4–8 ; *Historia Augusta, Gordiani tres* 10.8) et le préfet de la ville Sabinus (Hérodien 7.7.4 ; *Historia Augusta, Gordiani tres* 13.5).

Cet événement prit de l'ampleur à partir du moment où le Sénat de Rome intervint. A partir de ce moment, le coup de force se déroula suivant un schéma habituel. Gordien sollicita l'appui du Sénat pour consolider sa légitimité politique. Il adressa aussi aux gouverneurs des provinces des lettres afin d'obtenir leur ralliement. Ce rapide succès initial de l'entreprise était tel qu'on évoque l'hypothèse d'un complot du clan sénatorial africain[17], ou d'une résistance africaine à la romanisation[18]. La détermination du Sénat fut décisive pour donner de l'ampleur et de la force au mouvement né en Afrique. Maximin fut déclaré ennemi public (*hostis publicus*)[19]. La flotte prétorienne de Ravenne se rallia, assurant ainsi le contrôle d'une partie des routes maritimes. Enfin, le Sénat demanda aux gouverneurs provinciaux de jurer fidélité aux Gordiens. On constate, grâce aux témoignages épigraphiques que l'Orient hellénique et certaines provinces de l'Occident suivirent le mouvement avec unanimité[20]. Il importe en premier lieu de noter que le soulèvement contre Maximin ne reproduit pas le type classique du *pronunciamiento* (rébellion). Il n'y avait pas de troupes en Afrique pour appuyer les Gordiens; il n'y en avait que fort peu en Italie, où l'insurrection se répercuta immédiatement, et guère plus en Orient. Ce fut donc bien, selon l'expression de H.G. Mullens, «une révolte des civils[21]», désireux d'échapper à l'emprise que l'armée exerçait, directement ou

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[17] P.W. Townsend, 'The Revolution of A.D. 238: the Leaders and their Aims', *Yale Classical Studies* 14 (1955), 60. Une étude prosopographique fait apparaître que, sur les quelque 80 sénateurs d'origine africaine (13% de l'effectif total), plusieurs ont occupé des charges de premier plan dans les années 235–238. De nombreux clarissimes possédaient des terres en Afrique. Ces personnalités auraient, dans l'éventualité d'un complot, pu jouer le rôle d'agents de liaison entre les différents foyers de la conjuration. Hérodien insiste au contraire sur le caractère purement fortuit des événements (7.4.1); Selon Loriot, op. cit. (n. 7), 691 n. 269, rien, en l'état actuel de nos connaissances ne vient confirmer cette hypothèse.

[18] M. Benabou, *La résistance africaine à la romanisation* (Paris 1976), 205–207. A mon avis, il est plutôt question d'une résistance à une politique fiscale qui a empêché le peuple de pratiquer un mode de vie à la romaine. J. Gagé, *Les classes sociales dans l'Empire Romain* (Paris1964), 292: «Ceux qui ont tué le *rationalis* de Maximin sont des africains très romanisés.»

[19] *Historia Augusta*, *Gordiani tres* 11.9–10: «Nous déclarons à l'unanimité Maximin ennemi public!» Plus loin: «Puisse Rome voire nos empereurs!»

[20] Christol 1997, op. cit. (n. 3), 86. L'Aquitaine accepta les Gordiens, comme le montre une inscription de Bordeaux (*CIL* 13.592 = *ILS* 493). L'appui des provinces orientales fut peut-être encouragé par les origines anatoliennes des Gordiens. Loriot, op. cit. (n. 7), 694–699; A. Chastagnol (éd. et traduction), *Histoire Auguste* (Paris 1994), 693–694.

[21] H.G. Mullens, 'The revolt of the civilians A.D. 237–238', *Greece and Rome* 17 (1948), 65–77.

indirectement, sur la vie politique et, par le biais de la fiscalité, sur l'ensemble des activités économiques et sociales[22].

Comme le souligne avec juste raison J. Gagé, les adversaires du Thrace avaient conscience de lutter non seulement pour la défense de leurs intérêts matériels et de leur prépondérance économique, mais aussi pour préserver « un type de vie latine, ornée de loisirs, de spectacles, de luxe[23] ». C'est ce qui explique que les notables aient sans grande difficulté entraîné derrière eux la *plebs infima* des grandes villes : Rome, Carthage, Alexandrie, Aquilée[24]. La montée de l'armée et les dépenses qu'elle exigeait portaient atteinte au fonctionnement des institutions de Rome et à cet idéal du « pain et du cirque[25] ». Il est assez significatif que la rébellion ait eu comme point de départ la ville qui abrite le troisième amphithéâtre du monde romain[26].

Cependant cette tentative du peuple et du Sénat pour porter la légitimité impériale échoua devant les troupes du légat de Numidie, Capelianus, fidèle à Maximin. Les milices des cités africaines et les troupes de Carthage furent balayées : Gordien II fut tué et son père se suicida. A partir de février 238, le Sénat réagit alors en prenant en main, pour son propre compte, la direction de la révolte.

Les institutions politiques à Rome et la légitimité impériale

Au début de février 238 et après avoir honoré de l'apothéose les Gordiens, le Sénat élit en son sein, dans une « ambiance de restauration politique de nature aristocratique », une commission de vingt membres, les *vigintiviri consulares rei publicae curandae*[27]. Dans un second temps, au sein

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[22] Loriot, op. cit. (n. 7), 722–723.

[23] Gagé 1964, op. cit. (n. 18), 292–294.

[24] *CIL* 8.2170 = *ILS* 8499 (Theveste), une épitaphe d'un certain L. Aemilius Severinus, capturé par Capelianus et qui manifeste sur l'inscription son amour pour Rome.

[25] *Historia Augusta, Gordiani tres* 33.1–2 ; Loriot, op. cit. (n. 7), 731. On sait que plus tard Gordien III va manifester un intérêt particulier pour les jeux à Rome.

[26] Cet idéal de retour aux institutions traditionnelles est attesté sur les inscriptions africaines qui exaltent *l'indulgentia novi saeculi* (*CIL* 8.20487 ; 20602 ; *AE* 1903, no. 94). Des monnaies de bronze portant la légende *Libertas Aug(usti)* : *RIC* 4.3, 50 no. 318 a et b (Gordien III). L'*indulgentia* est l'opposé et la contrepartie de l'avidité (*auaritia*) qui caractérise les mauvais empereurs. En réalité, on s'aperçoit que cette vertu fut, plus ou moins systématiquement, revendiquée par tous les princes. Comme l'a souligné Mireille Corbier, elle s'exerce avant tout dans le domaine fiscal et se traduit ordinairement par des réductions ou remises d'impôt.

[27] A. Théodorides, « Les *vigintiviri consulares* », *Latomus* 6 (1947), 31–43.

de celle-ci, il choisit deux princes Pupien et Balbin, qui furent proclamés *imperatores*, puis *Augusti*[28]. Cette atmosphère de restauration, marquée par la revitalisation des procédures sénatoriales les plus traditionnelles, est illustrée par l'élévation de deux princes égaux, comme l'étaient les consuls de l'ancienne Rome. Des monnaies les qualifient du titre de Pères du Sénat[29]. La collégialité se voulait un coup de frein à la nature monarchique du pouvoir impérial. Les sénateurs se laissèrent aller à la formulation institutionnelle d'une utopie politique[30]. Les monnaies au type de la *Concordia*[31], et le thème iconographique des mains liées, symbole de la fidélité mettent en valeur l'échange des vertus entre les souverains *(amor, caritas, fides, pietas)*[32]. Mais, cette utopie aristocratique que réalisait le Sénat fut contestée par le peuple. Ce dernier exigea que le petit fils de Gordien Ier, qui n'avait que treize ans, participe au pouvoir.

L'épreuve de force du peuple tourne immédiatement en sa faveur : Pupien et Balbin sont contraints d'associer le jeune homme à leur pouvoir et de le faire entrer dans le collège impérial avec les titres de *nobilissimus Caesar* et de prince de la jeunesse. Sur les monnaies, Gordien III est à l'arrière-plan, mais l'exigence du peuple romain montre que le Sénat ne pouvait tenir fermement le principe d'un pouvoir purement électif qu'il aurait contrôlé lui-même. Le peuple romain réintroduisait le principe monarchique, fondé sur la continuité héréditaire. Il montrait les limites d'une tentative de réaction aristocratique et celles du pouvoir du Sénat. Certes, le peuple à Rome ou en province n'est pas une force autonome, mais il continue à jouer un rôle perturbateur lors d'une situation de crise, notamment lorsque cette dernière touche à la légitimité du pouvoir impérial[33]. En effet l'empereur puise sa légitimité dans le fait qu'il est mandataire du peuple. Certes, cette délégation par la collectivité n'était qu'une fiction, une idéologie pour éviter une dictature. Cependant, l'existence de cette fiction suffisait à empêcher l'empereur d'avoir la légitimité d'un monarque[34]. Les empereurs étaient conscients

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[28] Hérodien 7.10.1–9.
[29] *Patres Senatus* : *RIC* 4.2, 174 no. 11 + pl. 12.14.
[30] Christol 1997, op. cit. (n. 3), 87.
[31] *BMCRE* 6, 252 no. 18 ; 6, 254 no. 42 (Balbinus and Pupienus).
[32] *RIC* 4.2, 174 no. 9 + pl. 12.12 (*amor*) ; 4.2, 174 no. 10 + pl. 12.13 (*caritas*) ; 4.2, 170 no. 11 + 12.8 (*fides*) ; 4.2, 170 no. 12 + pl. 12.9 (*pietas*).
[33] H. Ménard, *Maintenir l'ordre à Rome : IIe–IVe siècles ap. J.-C.* (Seyssel, 2004).
[34] Veyne 2005, op. cit. (n. 1).

que la doctrine de la souveraineté populaire est un prétendu consensus universel qui confère un air de légitimité au prétendant vainqueur[35]. Dans l'un de ces discours, adressé aux troupes devant Aquilée, Pupien précise que «l'Empire en effet n'est pas la propriété d'un seul homme; c'est le bien commun du peuple romain».

On a pu se demander si ce coup d'arrêt immédiat n'aurait pas été suscité par un groupe de sénateurs et de chevaliers plus réalistes, inspiré par une philosophie politique plus proche de celle de Dion Cassius, qui prônait une monarchie tempérée. Mais c'est le peuple de Rome qui finit par imposer ses préférences grâce à l'intervention de la garnison de Rome. Au début du mois de mai 238, la crise fut dénouée par les prétoriens qui, après avoir envahi le palais, finirent par assassiner Pupien et Balbin et proclamer Gordien III Auguste. Ainsi l'armée se rallia au peuple pour imposer la continuité héréditaire. Le Sénat s'inclina et la mémoire de Pupien et Balbin fut l'objet d'une condamnation, bien attestée par les martelages[36]. C'est peut-être à ce moment-là que fut dissoute la légion III Augusta qui, en suivant les ordres de Capelianus, avait causé la perte des Gordiens: son nom fut soigneusement martelé sur les inscriptions du camp de Lambèse jusqu'à son rétablissement vers 253[37].

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[35] Pline, *Panégyrique* 10.2: Trajan a été choisi par la totalité de la population (*qui ubique sunt homines*). Veyne 2005, op. cit. (n. 1), 17: «La célèbre haine des Romains pour le mot «roi» est là; les Romains n'étaient pas les esclaves d'un maître, comme l'avaient été les peuples grecs et orientaux qu'ils avaient soumis». Veyne 2005, op. cit. (n. 1), 18. On n'a pas su établi «une règle automatique d'accession au trône qui imposât le choix du successeur et arrêter le bain de sang: pareille règle aurait offensé l'idée toute-puissante de souveraineté populaire et aurait fait de Rome un royaume. Il ne restait donc plus, au peuple et au sénat, qu'à légitimer les coups d'Etat vainqueurs au nom de la souveraineté du peuple ou plutôt du consensus de tous.»

[36] *AE* 1934, no. 230 (Aquilée): une inscription vouée à la triade capitoline ainsi qu'à Mars protecteur et vainqueur pour la victoire de Pupien, de Balbin et de Gordien César, le nom des deux empereurs a été par la suite supprimé.

[37] *CIL* 8.2482 = 17976 (*ILS* 531) Gemellae.

Vic(toriae) Aug(ustae, / pro sal(ute) d(ominorum duorum) n(ostrorum) / Valeriani et Gall/ieni [Aug(ustorum duorum), uexi]llat(io) mill/[iaria leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae) re]stitu/tae, e Raet(ia) Geme/ll(as) regressi, die / XI kal(endas) noue(mbres) Volusi/ano II et Maximo / co(n)s(ulibus), uotum soluer(unt) / per M(arcum) Fl(auium) Valente(m) / (centurionem) leg(ionis) s(upra) s(criptae), L(ucius) Volumius / Cresces, op(tio) pri(ncipis), / M(arcus) Aurel(ius) Licinius op(tio), / C(aius) Geminius Victor op(tio), / esculp(sit) (sic) et s(cripsit) Donatus. a. 22 octobre 253.

Une crise pour le maintien des institutions et des valeurs traditionnelles

Malgré la fragilité politique, l'empereur est plus que jamais la clé de voûte de tout le système politique. En effet, la fonction impériale est sacrée mais son représentant temporaire peut être tué s'il ne garantit pas un certain équilibre entre les institutions. Hérodien articule son récit autour de l'affrontement de deux forces : le peuple de Rome et les soldats[38]. La légitimité du pouvoir impérial, comme au IIe siècle, se manifeste donc comme la capacité du détenteur de la pourpre à maintenir la concorde entre ces deux éléments. Maximin échoue, tout comme Pupien et Balbin. Gordien III était le favori du peuple[39]. L'empereur exerce « un métier à haut risque » et est, selon l'expression de P. Veyne, « un aventurier qui avait réussi ou dont le père avait eu cette chance[40] ». Cette instabilité politique puise son origine dans la nature du césarisme, décrit par Th. Mommsen, comme étant « la révolution en permanence[41] ».

Le Sénat garde encore son poids idéologique, même si de plus en plus les empereurs sont acclamés par l'armée à la périphérie de l'Empire. Dans l'un de ses discours adressé aux troupes devant Aquilée, Pupien précise que « depuis toujours, c'est dans la ville de Rome que résident les destinées de l'Empire[42] ». Les recherches prosopographiques prouvent en effet que les plus importantes responsabilités continuent à être exercées par les sénateurs à Rome et dans les provinces[43]. En pratique, l'accord consensuel du sénat et de l'armée crée un empereur. Cependant, le sénat, à la différence des armées, ne prenait jamais l'ini-

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[38] D. Roques, « Le vocabulaire politique d'Hérodien », *Ktéma* 15 (1990), 35–71. D'après D. Roques, Hérodien qui écrit pour les élites urbaines de l'Orient Grec, construit son récit comme un Romain exagérant les situations pour créer des atmosphères pathétiques. Il est convaincu de vivre une époque de décadence, marquée par la montée de l'armée, des affranchis et des provinces. Détestant les soldats, Hérodien met en scène sa hantise du conflit entre civils, symbolisés par le Sénat, conflit qui est un sursaut salutaire au sein d'un lent processus de décadence.

[39] *Historia Augusta*, *Gordianai tres* 22.5 : « le jeune Gordien, qui n'était jusque-là que César, fut proclamé Auguste par les soldats, le peuple, le Sénat et toutes les nations de l'Empire dans un immense élan d'affection, un enthousiasme et une sympathie considérables. » ; 31.5–6 : « Il était aimé du peuple, du Sénat et des soldats comme aucun prince ne l'avait été. Cordus affirme que tous les soldats parlaient de lui en l'appelant leur fils, que tous les sénateurs le nommaient aussi leur fils et que le peuple le désignait comme son 'petit chéri'. »

[40] Veyne 2005, op. cit. (n. 1), 15 et 21.

[41] Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*, 2.2 (1952), 1133 : « nicht bloß praktisch, sondern auch theoretisch eine (…) rechtlich permanente Revolution ».

[42] Hérodien 8.7.2–7.

[43] Loriot, op. cit. (n. 7), 675–787.

tiative de mettre lui-même en piste un prétendant, pas même en 238 avec Gordien ; sans doute craignait-il de n'être pas suivi et le peuple de Rome ne l'a pas effectivement suivi, ou n'avait-il pas les moyens, l'armée, pour imposer par la force son choix[44]. Selon Hérodien, tout au long de ces épisodes se rétablit une hiérarchie des valeurs et finalement Rome domine le prince (Maximin) qui l'avait méprisée durant tout son règne en refusant de venir y faire consacrer sa légitimité. La morale du récit d'Hérodien tient dans le retournement ainsi opéré, symbolisé par la procession macabre de la tête de Maximin à travers les villes d'Italie jusqu'à Rome, puis sa présentation en divers lieux de la ville, comme la parodie d'une arrivée et d'une entrée impériale (*adventus*), celle à laquelle le prince choisi par les soldats s'était refusé.

Le pouvoir de la classe dirigeante sénatoriale était l'enjeu et la tentative de 238 était sérieuse. Mais sans doute, en prenant ce risque, les provinciaux africains étaient-ils persuadés que le mécontentement contre Maximin était général et pressentaient-ils que le Sénat les suivrait. En dépit de l'usurpation des Gordiens, les structures du Haut-Empire, bien que malmenées, demeurent pour l'essentiel intactes. Ainsi la crise politique n'est pas perçue comme une rupture mais comme une dynamique dans ce cycle de la 'révolution en permanence'. Il est d'ailleurs significatif que cette crise ait trouvé son dénouement à Rome, qui reste le siège du pouvoir impérial. Au delà d'un simple schéma d'opposition entre 'l'empereur des sénateurs' et 'l'empereur des soldats', cette crise révèle le sens profond des institutions du principat, du fonctionnement de la légitimité impériale et du statut de la cité de Rome. Cette crise a renforcé le pouvoir central et a fait émerger une nouvelle image de l'empereur Gordien III, celle d'un *dominus*, maître de la terre, de la mer et de tout le genre humain[45].

Paris, septembre 2006

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[44] Cassius Dion 74/75.2. Les Sévères, écrit un sénateur qui a vécu ce changement, «se reposaient sur la force de leurs soldats plus que sur l'approbation des nobles, leurs alliés naturels».

[45] *AE* 1972, no. 594. On passe de l'empereur-sénateur à l'empereur-soldat puis à l'empereur-sage. *L'histoire Auguste* insiste sur la solide culture littéraire de Gordien III. *Historia Augusta* 31.4. Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus*, qui traite de l'histoire de l'Empire d'Auguste à Constance II, insiste sur les qualités nécessaires au bon empereur, qui doit associer haute moralité et culture approfondie. Hérodien note le divorce entre la culture et le pouvoir, c'est-à-dire entre l'hellénisme et le pouvoir. (Roques 1990, op. cit. (n. 38)). Son idéal de gouvernement est le pouvoir exercé par une aristocratie éclairée et responsable.

THE PRINCIPATE – LIFEBELT, OR MILLSTONE AROUND THE NECK OF THE EMPIRE?

John Drinkwater*

The Augustan Principate was the product of crisis – a response to the challenges that precipitated the fall of the Republic. The Principate worked because it met the political needs of its day. There is no doubt that it saved the Roman state and the Roman Empire: it was a lifebelt. But it was not perfect. In its turn it precipitated more challenges that had to be responded to – more crises – in particular that known as the 'third century Crisis'. In the long run it was a problem as much as a solution: a millstone as much as a lifebelt. In the end, it had to go. I will briefly deal with the Principate as a problem, and then suggest a new way of discerning the strains that brought about its demise.

The Principate was created by Augustus and continued by the Julio-Claudians. However, there is a case for arguing that the Principate had still to establish itself as 'the office of emperor' as late as the death of Nero. The continuing challenges and responses that created and developed the Principate sometimes also broke it open to show its workings, and what contemporaries made of it. Thus Plutarch reports that in A.D. 68, Galba, on his way from Spain to take up power in Rome, entertained a group of senators in southern Gaul. Though he could have used the imperial furniture and servants sent to him by the Praetorian Prefect, Nymphidius Sabinus, initially he chose not to, which was remarked upon favourably by his guests.[1] Galba's modesty is explicable in various ways but, following Wiedemann's appreciation of Galba's family pride, I believe that he rejected this 'family silver' basically because it was the silver of an alien family.[2]

Galba, born in 3 B.C., had lived under all the Julio-Claudian rulers. His view of the Principate is therefore likely to have been shaped by how it was seen by the high Roman aristocracy at its inception: not as

* I am very grateful to Wolf Liebeschuetz for commenting on a preliminary draft of this paper.

[1] Plutarch, *Galba* 11.1: *kataskeuē kai therapeia basilikē*.

[2] T.E.J. Wiedemann, 'Nero to Vespasian', *CAH*^{2} 10, 256–282, at 262–263.

a monarchy, but as the Republic continuing under the patronage and direction of a great man and his *domus*.[3] In June 68, this first *domus* and its current leader had perished in disgrace and destruction.[4] But the Republic continued, and needed protection, and it was as the head of the next protective *domus* that Galba at first projected himself.[5] This explains why he revolted in the name of the Senate and People of Rome, and why he initially refused the 'imperial' titles – especially, of course, that of 'Caesar', which, as a family name, would have stuck in his aristocratic throat.[6] In 69 Vitellius, too, revolted in the name of the Senate and People of Rome, did not claim the title of Augustus until it was granted to him by the Senate, and initially rejected that of 'Caesar'.[7]

In the end, both were forced to call themselves 'Augustus' and 'Caesar' if only to lay their hands on the massive wealth of the *domus Caesaris*.[8] However, their actions demonstrate that by the middle of the first century A.D. Rome hardly possessed an established imperial monarchy. And, though rulers of successive dynasties acquired ever greater practical power, this potentially dangerous internal contradiction – Wallace Hadrill's 'pose of denial'[9] – persisted within the system. Extremely illuminating in this respect is the remark attributed to Trajan when appointing Sextus Attius Suburanus as his Praetorian Prefect: "Take this sword and use it for me if I rule well, and against me if I rule badly." This instruction is reported favourably by Pliny the Younger, Dio and Aurelius Victor, and without disapproval by Millar.[10] However, in terms of fostering political stability it is a disastrous precept. It urges

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[3] Cf. Cassius Dio 54.12.4: *prostasia*; 55.6.1, 55.12.3: *hēgemonia*. (I owe these references, and the following, to Wolf Liebeschuetz.)

[4] As Tacitus has Galba say (*Historiae* 1.16): *Sub Tiberio et Gaio et Claudio unius familiae quasi hereditatis fuimus* ("Under Tiberius, Gaius and Claudius we Romans were the heritage, so to speak, of one family" [trans. C.H. Moore, Loeb ed.]).

[5] Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.16 (again by Galba, as *rector* of the Empire): *et finita Iuliorum Claudiorumque domo optimum quemquem adoptio inveniet* ("since the houses of the Julii and the Claudii are ended, adoption will select only the best" [trans. C.H. Moore, Loeb ed.]).

[6] Plutarch, *Galba* 5.2; D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle. Grundzüge einer römischen Kaiserchronologie* (Darmstadt 1996[2]), 102. Cf. Suetonius, *Galba* 1.2.

[7] Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.62; 2.62; 3.58; Kienast 1996, op. cit. (n. 6), 106; Wiedemann 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), 273.

[8] T.E.J. Wiedemann, 'Tiberius to Nero', *CAH*[2] 10, 198–255, at 200–202.

[9] A. Wallace-Hadrill, '*Civilis princeps*: between citizen and king', *Journal of Roman Studies* 72 (1982), 32–48, at 36.

[10] Pliny, *Panegyricus* 67.8; Dio 68.16.1[2]; Aurelius Victor, *Caesares* 13.9; F.G.B. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (London 1977), 123.

continuous assessment of the man, not automatic fealty to the office, on criteria that are Republican not monarchical,[11] and so encourages challenge for the control of the whole Roman world.[12]

This brings us to interesting issues such as Flaig's dismissal of notions of 'legitimacy' and 'illegitimacy' with reference to the office of emperor.[13] In terms of the Principate as a problem, and much else besides, the Roman imperial 'constitution' is indeed a fascinating topic, still capable of enormous development. A great deal of valuable work has, of course, been done of late: one thinks of that of Wiedemann and Flaig, already mentioned, and, for the later period, that of Pabst.[14] I hope that in future research I shall be able to pursue the idea of early Roman rulers as great aristocrats rather than monarchs.[15] Their control of the Roman state may be construed as Republican aristocratic *aemulatio* carried to destructive extremes; and their pride in their lines, and so their favouring of dynastic succession, as much aristocratic as monarchical.[16]

I now turn to the notion of the Principate as a fatally strained form of government, and raise a specific issue which will return us to two of the main themes of this volume: the impact of crisis on administration and politics, and the wider historical perspective of the third century Crisis. What did these 'emperors', who were not emperors, make of their position? The Principate was based on the brilliant devising and marketing of the Augustan 'message': that the dominance of the Julian

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[11] Measuring him on a scale calibrated between the extremes of *civilitas* and *superbia*: Wallace-Hadrill 1982, op. cit. (n. 9), 43, 45–46.

[12] The sentiment goes back, of course, to Augustus. Cf. his habit of never commending his sons to the people without adding "if they are worthy": Suetonius, *Augustus* 56.1; P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor MI 1988, trans. A. Shapiro), 215.

[13] E. Flaig, 'Für eine Konzeptionalisierung der Usurpation im Spätrömischen Reich', in F. Paschoud and J. Szidat (eds.), *Usurpationen in der Spätantike* (Historia Einzelschriften 111, Stuttgart 1997), 15–34, at 19.

[14] Wiedemann 1996, op. cit. (n. 2 and n. 8). E. Flaig, *Den Kaiser herausfordern. Die Usurpationen im Römischen Reich* (Frankfurt 1992); Flaig 1997, op. cit. (n. 13); A. Pabst, *Comitia imperii. Ideelle Grundlagen des römischen Kaisertums* (Darmstadt 1997). See the very useful review of important aspects of the problem in O. Hekster, *Commodus. An Emperor at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam 2002), 16–30.

[15] Cf. Wallace-Hadrill 1982, op. cit. (n. 10), 36, noting the 'Mommsen/Alföldi' controversy.

[16] Cf. F. Kolb, 'Die Gestalt des spätantiken Kaisertums unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Tetrarchie', in F. Paschoud and J. Szidat (eds.), *Usurpationen in der Spätantike* (Historia Einzelschriften 111, Stuttgart 1997), 35–45, at 38, on the traditional Roman association of *virtus* and 'Erbprinzip'.

clan was the end of history. The 'future', 'prophesied' in the mythical past, was now the present. All that remained was the eternity of Rome.[17] So, how was this handled by emperors who were not descended from or adopted into the Caesars – beginning with Galba? The practical solution was, as we have seen, that they were compelled to adopt the Augustan message, associating themselves with prophecy by calling themselves 'Caesar'.[18] But exactly how was all this articulated and explained by these emperors, both to themselves and to others? The short answer is we do not know. As far as I am aware, we have no text indicating that this was ever directly taken up and thrashed out by contemporaries. I can find nothing along these lines in, for example, Seneca, Pliny the Younger, Tacitus or Dio. The gap is significant – part of the sclerotic ideology of the Principate, to which I will come below. However, it has struck me, in the light of recent publications,[19] that we may be able to find an indirect answer to these questions in the great structures of imperial Rome: on the Capitol and the Palatine and in the Forum and the Campus Martius.

As is now widely accepted, Augustus hammered home his message in buildings and monuments, in what was the culmination of a battle for prestige between the leaders of great *domus* that began with Marius and Sulla.[20] As is also generally acknowledged, Augustus used these monuments and buildings to tell the particular story of a particular family. Central Rome was re-cast as a narrative in stone of the inevitability and rightness of the Julian protectorate. This was expressed most clearly in the *Forum Augusti* and its great temple of Mars Ultor.[21] But it is surely legitimate to wonder what the reactions of a Flavian, Antonine or Severan ruler were on visiting this complex, which has been called "the distillation of the collective memory of Republican Rome for the benefit of the Julio-Claudian dynasty"[22] What was it like for such men to move in the townscape of Julio-Claudian Rome?

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[17] N. de Chaisemartin, *Rome: Paysage urbain et idéologie des Scipions à Hadrien (IIe s. av. J.-C. – IIe s. ap. J.-C.)* (Paris 2003), 226.

[18] Cf. Zanker 1988, op. cit. (n. 12), 33: the Principate was founded on and continued by the name of 'Caesar'.

[19] Specifically Zanker 1988, op. cit. (n. 12), and Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), but see also in general burgeoning 'Rezeption' studies.

[20] Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 64.

[21] Zanker 1988, op. cit. (n. 12), 193–195, 210; Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 125–128.

[22] Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 128.

We must not overlook the obvious. There can be no doubt that they would have felt at ease because they were magistrates of the City. The Roman Senate's granting them *imperium*, before and after they came to power, was more than window-dressing. Again, the Republican, aristocratic, non-imperial, aspect of the Principate is crucial to its understanding. However, we can see successive dynasties also using buildings and monuments to express their own message to the City and to the World, and a fundamental element of this was: "We too are part of the Augustan tradition." In brief, they did this by:

a) Sedulously conserving the existing buildings of the tradition: maintaining them, and restoring them if they became damaged through old age, fire or flood.[23]
b) Adding to them in the same architectural tradition – i.e. with fora and temples, beginning with Vespasian and his Forum/Temple of Peace.[24]
c) Crucially, respecting and continuing their religious tradition. As Zanker says, Rome was a city whose heart was unusually dominated by temples.[25]

This last was possible because Augustus' religious repertoire was remarkably wide, allowing his successors easy access to all the main Greek and Roman gods. In other words, though Augustus made much of the Julian descent from Venus, he also showed immense reverence to all the Olympians and to the traditional Roman deities. Later rulers could therefore honour a wide variety of these without flouting Augustan conventions.[26] And since the same deities figure prominently in the Homeric poems and the stories of early Italy, the rulers who worshipped them could link themselves to the Troy story and the Romulus-foundation myth.[27] The Roman link to Troy, in particular, had, under the Republic, never been a Julian monopoly. The Vergilian canon was

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[23] For restoration after major fires see, e.g., Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 169, 177 (Domitian); A. Boëthius and J.B. Ward-Perkins, *Etruscan and Roman Architecture* (Harmondsworth 1970), 270 (Severans).

[24] Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 167.

[25] P. Zanker, 'The city as symbol. Rome and the creation of an urban image', in E.B.W. Fentress (ed.), *Romanization and the City: Creations, Transformations, and Failures* (Portsmouth RI 2000), 25–41, at 34.

[26] On the breadth of Augustan religion see Zanker 1988, op. cit. (n. 12), 53, 56, 85, 187, 193; Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 100, 102, 110–111, 113, 117, 120.

[27] This is especially true, of course, of traditional Roman worship of Jupiter, the ultimate authority in the *Aeneid*: see, e.g., 4.220–221.

just one of a host of such stories that could be told concerning this link.[28] It would therefore not have seemed out of place for later non-Julii to claim their own association with it, and so attach themselves to prophecy-become-history. Like Augustus, they too were connected to the founders and foundation of Rome.[29]

Examination of post-Augustan building activities throws up some predictable results. Famously, of course, Nero, the ruler who most flouted architectural tradition, came to a sticky end.[30] However, it also throws up some less predictable features, with certain rulers turning out, in this respect, to be much more, or less, conservative than they are traditionally depicted. The supposedly proto-tyrannical Domitian nervously squeezed his forum-complex into the established framework.[31] The 'good' Trajan's Forum is, on the other hand, disturbingly militaristic.[32] And the 'revolutionary' Commodus did little to disturb the prevailing order.[33]

The central monuments and buildings reflect, and may even be seen as a paradigm of, the Principate as 'lifebelt'. They are a concrete manifestation of the cultural continuity and relative political stability that, for almost three centuries, the Augustan system gave the Empire. But they may also be seen as a paradigm of the Principate as 'millstone'. Rulers' boastful adornment of 'downtown' Rome was just another aspect of narrow aristocratic *aemulatio*. The convention of maintaining the Augustan architectural and religious heritage was politically necessary but practically difficult (through expense and shortage of space) and intellectually stultifying (because it allowed little or no room for experiment or change).[34] Innovation – in the form of Hadrian's Pan-

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[28] T.P. Wiseman, *The Myths of Rome* (Exeter 2004), 21. Cf. Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 107: more correctly, the Varronian, Livian, Vergilian canon.

[29] Zanker 1988, op. cit. (n. 12), 74–5; Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 67–68, 75, 177, 213, 230. Wiseman 2004, op. cit. (n. 28), 21, lists Aemilii, Cloelii, Geganii, Nautii, Sergii and Sulpicii as patrician houses that also, from a very early date, claimed Trojan descent. Cf. Zanker 1988, op. cit. (n. 12), 209, for how Augustus' harping on the Julian version of the Troy story very early led to its crude satirisation.

[30] Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 155–156.

[31] Cf. Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 170, on Domitian as architecturally conservative.

[32] Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 201–214.

[33] Hekster 2002, op. cit. (n. 14), 203–205.

[34] An important factor here was the apparent convention that, though rulers could re-develop secular sites, they must always replace temples. See, e.g., Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 164, 167, 177, 227. Note how Elagabalus' temple of Ba'al was re-dedicated to Jupiter Ultor: Boëthius and Ward-Perkins 1970, op. cit. (n. 23), 274.

theon or, perhaps even more significant in the context of the last great round of challenge and response, Aurelian's Temple of the Sun – was restricted to the periphery.[35] Unable to move forwards, the Augustan architectural and religious heritage was incapable of further development: just like the Augustan Principate, it was officially stranded at 'the end of history'.[36]

As we return from paradigm to process, we can see that this was dangerous. The central monuments and buildings also reflect the continuing ideological importance of the city of Rome – as the seat of the Republic which was the only institution which could formally grant a *princeps* his power. This is why, in the challenges and responses of the third century, rulers must constantly seek the city – to confirm their rule or prevent rivals from doing the same. This distracted them from dealing with problems elsewhere, and made Italy the cockpit of civil war.[37] And the Principate and its associated strain ran late – much later than is usually accepted. Diocletian restored the Julianic Senate House;[38] and his promotion of himself as the directive 'Jovius' to Maximian's executive 'Herculius' was deeply old-fashioned, clumsy and ineffective.[39] Maxentius seized Rome, forced Constantine to fight him for power there and, before his downfall, as Hekster has shown, returned enthusiastically to the Augustan tradition, including building.[40] He restored old structures and squeezed his Basilica Nova into the last available piece of space in the city centre.

The third-century Crisis did not end in 284/5: it took a break, and recommenced in 306! And, likewise, the Principate was not yet destroyed, only changed. Its contradictions and weaknesses continued to dog and clog the system.

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[35] Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 219–23; cf. Zanker 1988, op. cit. (n. 12), 139–41. Boëthius and Ward-Perkins 1970, op. cit. (n. 23), 498–500; A. Watson, *Aurelian and the Third Century* (London 1999), 192.

[36] Cf. Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 226.

[37] J.F. Drinkwater, 'Maximinus to Diocletian and the 'Crisis', *CAH*² 12, 28–66, at 63.

[38] Boëthius and Ward-Perkins 1970, op. cit. (n. 23), 500.

[39] Cf. esp. Zanker 1988, op. cit. (n. 12), 230, with Chaisemartin 2003, op. cit. (n. 17), 191, 222, 226; Kolb 1997, op. cit. (n. 16), 37; R. Rees, 'The emperors' new names. Diocletian Jovius and Maximian Herculius', in L. Rawlings and H. Bowden (eds.), *Herakles/Hercules in the Ancient World* (Swansea 2005), 223–239, at esp. 227 and 233.

[40] O. Hekster, 'The city of Rome in late imperial ideology: the Tetrarchs, Maxentius and Constantine', *Mediterraneo Antico* 2 (1999), 717–748.

So, Constantine, like a challenger of an earlier generation, having taken Rome, found himself powerless before the forces of tradition. This is again reflected in his buildings. He could do little in the centre. Indeed, he was forced to accept Maxentius' Basilica. His great church of St. John Lateran was, like the Pantheon and the Temple of the Sun, forced to the periphery.[41] Stultification, in the buildings at the heart of the imperial capital as in the evolution of the imperial political system, threatened to continue. It will now be very clear where my argument is going. It is entirely consistent with Hekster's comment: "Only by fully renouncing Rome and her traditions could Constantine become the first Christian emperor."[42] But I would stress the wider historical picture, and would extend Hekster's conclusion, as follows: "Only by fully renouncing Rome and her traditions could Constantine throw off the millstone of the Principate, and so finally put an end to the third century 'Crisis'." To develop solutions indicated by this crisis, and partly followed up by the Tetrarchs, future rulers of the Empire needed new *space*, topographical and ideological, and they found it in Constantinople.

Nottingham, July 2006

[41] R. Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals. Topography and Politics* (Berkeley CA/London 1983), 2–3, 28–29 ("sparing pagan sentiment"!); M.J. Johnson, 'Architect of Empire', in N. Lenski (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine* (Cambridge 2006), 278–297, at 283.

[42] Hekster 1999, op. cit. (n. 40), 748.

EXEMPLARY GOVERNMENT IN THE EARLY ROMAN EMPIRE

Michael Peachin*

"I predict, and I am sure my prediction is correct, that your histories will be immortal. And so all the more – I openly admit it – do I want to be included therein." This is the entreaty with which Pliny the Younger began a famous letter to his friend Tacitus.[1] The senator from Comum was angling for inclusion in what he supposed would be a monumental work of literature. By what means, though, did Pliny imagine himself to have earned a place in Tacitus' *Histories*? The story went like this.

Pliny and Herennius Senecio had been engaged by the senate to prosecute a former governor of Baetica, a man named Baebius Massa. At a given moment during the proceedings, Massa complained that Senecio had acted with malice, and he thus requested a countercharge of, as Pliny puts it, *impietas* against Senecio.[2] However, the fact that Massa wanted to go against Senecio alone raised something of a ruckus, which Pliny describes thus:

> Amidst the general consternation I began to speak: "Most noble consuls, I am afraid that by not including me in his accusation Massa's very silence has charged me with collusion with himself." These words were acclaimed at once and subsequently much talked about; indeed, the deified emperor Nerva (who never failed to notice anything done for the good of the State even before he became emperor) sent me a most impressive letter in which he congratulated not only me but our generation for being blessed with an example (thus did he write) so much in the best tradition. Whatever the merit of this incident, you can make it better known and increase its fame and importance, but I am not asking you to go beyond what is

* I should like to thank my colleague, Michèle Lowrie, for her most perceptive and helpful comments on a draft of this paper. Thanks are also due to audiences in Heidelberg, Zurich, and Cologne (in 2002), as well as at Yale and Princeton (in 2006), for their contributions to successive versions of my arguments on this topic.

[1] Plinius Minor, *Epistulae* 7.33. All translations of Pliny are those by Betty Radice from the Loeb edition, with some minor changes.

[2] It seems likely that the charge was, to be precise, *maiestas*. See C. Jones, 'A New Commentary on the Letters of Pliny', *Phoenix* 22 (1968), 134–135.

> due to the facts. History should always confine itself to the truth, which in its turn is enough for honest deeds.[3]

Now, we would perhaps find that Pliny has moved toward the outermost fringes of modesty with this petition; and, to our taste, his *dictum* probably does not seem so terribly impressive anyhow. But be that as it may, the epistolographer's objective is plain: by retelling the *facta* and *dicta* of this clash with Baebius Massa, Pliny has recorded himself, and has done so regardless of Tacitus' eventual response, and regardless also, for that matter, of anything written to Pliny by Nerva, as an *exemplum*.[4]

This was a matter obviously very dear to Pliny's heart.[5] And yet, it is only in relatively recent years that scholars working on the Roman world have developed their own significant fondness for *exempla*.[6] Now,

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[3] Plinius Minor, *Epistulae* 7.33.8–10: *Horror omnium; ego autem "Vereor" inquam, "clarissimi consules, ne mihi Massa silentio suo praevaricationem obiecerit, quod non et me reum postulavit." Quae vox et statim excepta, et postea multo sermone celebrata est. Divus quidem Nerva (nam privatus quoque attendebat his quae recte in publico fierent) missis ad me gravissimis litteris non mihi solum, verum etiam saeculo est gratulatus, cui exemplum (sic enim scripsit) simile antiquis contigisset. Haec, utcumque se habent, notiora clariora maiora tu facies; quamquam non exigo ut excedas actae rei modum. Nam nec historia debet egredi veritatem, et honeste factis veritas sufficit. Vale.*

[4] An *exemplum* could be defined in various ways, for instance: *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.62, *exemplum est alicuius facti aut dicti praeteriti cum certi auctoris nomine propositio*; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 5.11.6, …*exemplum, id est rei gestae*…*commemoratio*…Some useful modern definitions are: T. Habinek, *The Politics of Latin Literature: Writing, Empire, and Identity in Ancient Rome* (Princeton 1998), 46: "An *exemplum* is something 'taken out of' (*eximo*) a group in order to serve as a standard by which other instances of the type can be evaluated (*existimare*)"; J. Chaplin, *Livy's Exemplary History* (Oxford 2000), 3: "any specific citation of an event or an individual that is intended to serve as a guide to conduct;" M. Roller, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 01.07.03 (a review of Chaplin): a persuasive, authorizing move, embedded deeply in performative acts (I paraphrase Roller here). While it is essential to keep the ancient definitions in mind, it seems to me that these modern descriptions are, on the whole, more useful to any scholarly investigation of this phenomenon. Pliny, of course, claims several times in his letters, that he is teaching others by offering up the *exemplum* of himself: *Epistulae* 1.18.5; 2.6.6; 7.1.7. Notice also the sentiment at *Epistulae* 8.18.12: *Nam cum aures hominum novitate laetantur, tum ad rationem vitae exemplis erudimur*. For a parallel to what Pliny was up to, see B. Reay, 'Agriculture, Writing, and Cato's Aristocratic Self-Fashioning', *Classical Antiquity* 24 (2005), 336–340.

[5] Indeed, the *exemplum* was, just generally throughout Roman society (i.e., not only in aristocratic circles), an extremely important mechanism for the molding (or description or perception) of conduct. As we are told by the *Senatus Consultum de Cn. Pisone* (lines 155–158), the *plebs* followed the example of the equestrian order during that imbroglio. Or, note the self-laudatory inscription of a soldier, which ends with the following assertion (*CIL* 3.3676 = *ILS* 2558): *exemplo mihi sum primus qui talia gessi*.

[6] I cite just a few items, by way of example: M. Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and the Rhetoric of the New Nobility* (London 1992); K.-J. Hölkeskamp, '*Exempla* und *mos maiorum*. Überlegungen zum kollektiven Gedächtnis der Nobilität', in H.-J. Gehrke and

underlying most of this scholarship is, in Matthew Roller's words, a sense of, "the aristocracy's utter saturation with exemplary models for action transmitted from the past, whether through narratives, commemorative statuary and other monuments, social spectacles like triumphs and funeral processions, or other cultural forms."[7] In short, scholarly occupation with *exempla* and exemplarity has tended, thus far, to reveal the ways in which this device functioned within the formal boundaries of literature and art, or, moving beyond the confines of these particular creative fora, how it served in the broader cultural context to shape society's morals and likewise to mold the behavior of individuals (viz. private citizens).[8]

In the present paper, I want to consider exemplarity from another angle. I want to draw attention to the ways in which *exempla* contributed, and did so roughly on a level with acts that we would comfortably categorize as statutory (e.g., decrees of popular assemblies, *senatus consulta*, or formal edicts issued by emperors), to what we would perceive as the constitutional foundation of the imperial government. In particular, I will concentrate on the emperor and his powers. What things was he 'officially' competent to do, and how might *exempla* have played a role in establishing something approximating what we could view as a 'legal' or 'constitutional' rationale for his undertaking these things? And of

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A. Möller (eds.), *Vergangenheit und Lebenswelt. Soziale Kommunikation, Traditionsbildung und historisches Bewußtsein* (Tübingen 1996), 301–338; D. Wardle, *Valerius Maximus. Memorable Deeds and Sayings. Book 1* (Oxford 1998); A. Weileder, *Valerius Maximus. Spiegel kaiserlicher Selbstdarstellung* (München 1998); I. Oppermann, *Zur Funktion historischer Beispiele in Ciceros Briefen* (Leipzig 2000); F. Wittchow, *Exemplarisches Erzählen bei Ammianus Marcellinus. Episode,* Exemplum, *Anekdote* (München 2001); M. Koortbojian, 'A Painted *Exemplum* at Rome's Temple of Liberty', *Journal of Roman Studies* 92 (2002), 33–48; M. Roller, 'Exemplarity in Roman Culture: the Cases of Horatius Cocles and Cloelia', *Classical Philology* 99 (2004), 1–56; C. Kraus, 'From *Exempla* to Exemplar? Writing History around the Emperor in Imperial Rome', in J. Edmondson, S. Mason and J. Rives (eds.), *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome* (Oxford 2005), 181–200; F. Bücher, *Verargumentierte Geschichte.* Exempla Romana *im politischen Diskurs der späten römischen Republik* (Stuttgart 2006).

[7] *Bryn Mawr Classical Reveiw* 01.07.03.

[8] Michèle Lowrie will take things a step further, and will argue that *exempla* often functioned so as to shape the workings of history altogether: 'Making an *Exemplum* of Yourself: Cicero and Augustus', in S. Heyworth, with P. Fowler and S. Harrison (eds.), *Classical Constructions. Papers in Memory of Don Fowler, Classicist and Epicurean* (Oxford 2007); *The* Exemplum, *the Exception, and Self-Authorization in Cicero, Caesar, and Augustus* (book in progress). For the ways in which *exempla* thoroughly shaped historical writing and historical thinking during the Republic, see the fine treatment by U. Walter, Memoria *und* res publica. *Zur Geschichtskultur im republikanischen Rom* (Frankfurt 2004), especially 51–70 and 374–407.

course, in the end, we shall want to ask for what reasons the Romans might have chosen to operate in the fashion I shall argue they did.

Why, though, this particular theme among a group of papers intending to examine crises in the Roman Empire? The answer, I think, is relatively straightforward. It seems to me that discovering the nature and the proper workings of their new government was probably the greatest crisis facing the Romans of the early imperial period.[9] It must also be recognized that this crisis was on-going, that the early-imperial Romans never, in some finalized manner, resolved it. Instead, they accustomed themselves to living with an emperor – for better or for worse – yet all the while cherished the fantasy of casting him aside. Other papers in this volume (especially those by Benoist and Drinkwater) also grapple, in one way or another, precisely with this conundrum; it is one that merits, I believe, some attention.

Let us begin, then, with Augustus and his *Res Gestae*. Chapters 1–8 of that document first describe how Augustus rose to power, then outline his military achievements, and finally provide the essential lineaments of his governmental role, or persona. It is in this portion of the text that we read of declined dictatorships, multiple consulates, his curatorship of the *annona*, tribunican power, and the like. The eighth chapter describes occupation with matters of the census. From here, Augustus would move on to discussion of religious honors, finances, and ultimately warfare. Chapter eight, though, ends with a transitional sentence, and what the first emperor had to say at this point demands careful scrutiny. Augustus wrote this:

> By means of new laws, these passed upon my proposal, I restored many examples of our ancestors, which were already dying out in our times, and I myself have left for my successors examples of many things that should be imitated.[10]

Now, one might be inclined to perceive Augustus as talking only about morals. Thus, the statutes in question would be the Julian marriage laws, and he himself would stand as ethical exemplar specifically and only in this particular realm for later generations. Such a reading finds perhaps

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[9] I am thinking here along the lines of the following definition of crisis from the Webster's Dictionary: "an unstable or crucial time or state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending; esp: one with the distinct possibility of a highly undesirable outcome."

[10] *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 8.5: *Legibus novis me auctore latis multa exempla maiorum exolescentia iam ex nostro saeculo reduxi et ipse multarum rerum exempla imitanda posteris tradidi.*

some support in the concluding portion of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where Jupiter proclaims that Augustus, *exemploque suo mores reget*.[11]

On the other hand, we are told by Suetonius that the first emperor was in the habit of scouring Greek and Latin literature for apposite *exempla*, which he would then send as guides for behavior to his household staff, to his generals, to provincial governors, or to the various magistrates in Rome.[12] And of course, Augustus does say in this eighth chapter of his *Res Gestae* that he bequeaths examples *multarum rerum*. That is, he does not explicitly limit these examples to one particular realm of activity. Perhaps, then, we would do better were we not to construe this claim all too narrowly. That is, perhaps we should not confine these "examples of many things to be imitated" strictly to the sphere of (especially sexual) morality. For the *Res Gestae* is itself, let us remember, a catalogue of many things, of all kinds, that would indeed cry out for imitation. It therefore seems plausible enough that Augustus here proclaims himself to be the exemplar in toto for those who would succeed him, and that he provides, with the *Res Gestae*, exactly the kind of advice for later emperors that he was wont to extract from literature for his household staff, generals, or provincial governors.[13]

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[11] Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.832–838: *pace data terris animum ad civilia vertet | iura suum legesque feret iustissimus auctor | exemploque suo mores reget inque futuri | temporis aetatem venturorumque nepotum | prospiciens prolem sancta de coniuge natam | fere simul nomenque suum curasque iubebit | nec, nisi cum †senior similes† aequaverit annos | aetheria sedes cognataque sidera tanget.* P. Brunt & J. Moore, *Res Gestae divi Augusti. The Achievements of the Divine Augustus* (Oxford 1967), 52 take 8.5 as referring specifically (and apparently only) to the marriage legislation. On the other hand, neither Th. Mommsen, *Res gestae divi Augusti ex monumentis Ancyrano et Apolloniensi* (Berlin 1883[2]), 40 nor H. Volkmann, *Res gestae divi Augusti. Das Monumentum Ancyranum* (Berlin 1969[3]), 21 clearly make such a restriction, and both in fact seem to understand the passage in the broader sense, which will be suggested just below. Cf. also to that effect Wardle 1998, op. cit. (n. 6), 70. E. Ramage, *The Nature and Purpose of Augustus' "Res Gestae"* (Stuttgart 1987), 90–91 notes the reference to the marriage legislation, and then moves beyond: "But as significant as the laws is the fact that Augustus is offering personal example through them. In other words, he and the laws are one; he stands for justice. Thus the emperor is here providing a clear, concise statement of the Iustitia Augusta which runs through the *RG* and which, as with Victoria Augusta and Pax Augusta, had its place in the Augustan ideology as a concept worthy of deification and cult."

[12] Suetonius, *Vita Augusti* 89.2. On some attempts of Tiberius to teach the *plebs* by dishing up historical *exempla*, see W. Eck, '*Plebs* und *Princeps* nach dem Tod des Germanicus', in I. Malkin and Z. Rubinsohn (eds.), *Leaders and Masses in the Roman World. Studies in Honor of Zvi Yavetz* (Leiden 1995), 1–2.

[13] Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht* II,2 (Leipzig 1887[3]), 988 long ago argued that Augustus' successors followed the first emperor's *exemplum* in engaging a *consilium* of advisors. With respect to Augustus' construction of an equestrian administrative structure, and his successors having similarly followed his lead in this respect, see

There is another point that should be made regarding this passage from the *Res Gestae*: Augustus intimates a hierarchy of authority.[14] As he puts it, he must effectively retreat to the expedient of laws so as to resurrect valuable *exempla*. In other words, to the first emperor's mind, the example appears to have been, in the final analysis, somehow superior to, or more important than, the *lex*. This understanding of Augustus' words is strengthened by the fact that he hereupon claims himself to have bequeathed not laws to be obeyed, but examples to be imitated. That those who came after the first prince apprehended things in just exactly these terms is urged by various bits and pieces of evidence.

Strabo, for example, flatly asserts that Tiberius, Germanicus, and Drusus employed Augustus as a model – *kanon* is the Greek word he uses – for their own actions in governing.[15] Roughly a century later, Tacitus would several times stress the fact that Tiberius modeled himself as emperor on Augustus.[16] Indeed, Tacitus puts just such a statement directly into the mouth of the second Caesar. During a debate in the senate, the question was raised as to whether the Spaniards should be allowed to dedicate a temple to Tiberius *exemplo Asiae* (Augustus had earlier received a temple at Pergamum). In the course of deciding to follow his father's lead in this matter, Tiberius is supposed to have said that he considered all of his father's *facta* and *dicta* to carry the force of law.[17]

W. Eck, 'Die Ausformung der ritterlichen Administration als Antisenatspolitik?', in idem, *Die Verwaltung des Römischen Reiches in der Hohen Kaiserzeit. Ausgewählte und erweiterte Beiträge. Band I* (Basel 1995), 52–54. And on later emperors adhering to Augustus' "Vorbild" in naming suffect consuls on a regular basis, see W. Eck, Consules ordinarii und consules suffecti als eponyme Amtsträger', in *Epigrafia. Actes du Colloque en mémoire de Attilio Degrassi, Rom Mai 1988* (Rome 1991), 16. These are just a few examples of such behavior. Many more could be adduced.

[14] I should like to thank Werner Eck, who drew my attention to this when I lectured in Cologne.

[15] Strabo 6.4.2 (C 288).

[16] Tacitus, *Annales* 1.77.3: *neque fas Tiberio infringere dicta eius* (in this instance, Augustus had decreed that actors were not to be beaten by state officials). Tacitus, *Vita Agricolae* 13.2 (here, Tiberius follows Augustus' *exemplum*, in that he leaves Britain in peace). Cf. also Suetonius, *Vita Tiberii* 22.

[17] Tacitus, *Annales* 4.37.3. With respect to this passage, E. Koestermann, *Cornelius Tacitus Annalen. Band II. Buch 4–6* (Heidelberg 1965), 129 writes rather scathingly: "Die Hinweise des Tiberius auf das Vorbild des Augustus, dem er ständig nacheiferte, entbehren freilich in der Darstellung des Tacitus nicht des malitiösen Beigeschmackes. Andererseits verdeutlichen sie nur zu sehr, daß der zweite Princeps nicht die Kraft und auch nicht die Gabe besaß, sich von der Politik seines Vorgängers zu lösen und neue Wege der Politik zu beschreiten." It seems to me, though, that given the usual Roman criteria and sensibilities, and given Augustus' explicitly announced intent in the

This talk of the emperor setting an edifying, or even something approaching a legally binding, *exemplum* for his successors was widespread. And of course, as a particular menu of imperial figures eventually unfolded, the 'good' emperors would be carefully selected as those who could properly illustrate imperial behavior. Thus, Pliny, in his *Panegyric*, would construe Trajan as the *exemplum* for later emperors to follow.[18] There is, in short, much talk of this kind in early-imperial literature.[19]

The talk, however, is not just talk. Such discourse does not merely involve lame theorizing, or flacid praise, or idle desire. We are not here face-to-face with a simple reflection of the otherwise perfectly established imperial might, but rather, with something significantly more complicated. For this is a kind of discourse that served, and served in a very real way, to construct legality and legitimacy for the imperial position, and then to broadcast these constructions. In short, certain *exempla* made apparent by, or advertised via, the doings and sayings of certain emperors could indeed be enlisted, just like more formally statutory acts (say, *leges*, or decrees of the senate), to justify in a pragmatically legal or constitutional sense the governmental prerogatives of the *princeps*. In fact, it might even be argued that this is precisely the fashion in which the Romans of the early-imperial period most preferred to build legitimacy for the newly articulated powers of their emperors. In order to demonstrate this, let us turn from one prince's autobiographical and idealizing epitaph, and from 'mere' literary texts, to an inscribed, official document.

Res Gestae (and, we might guess, also elsewhere), it would have been glaringly unwise, indeed, nearly impossible, simply to have ignored the *exempla* bequeathed by the first emperor. And by way of illustration, we might note that Tiberius left exactly the same donative to the soldiers in his will as did Augustus in his. See S. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy. Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley 1999), 140 n. 76.

[18] See, for example, Plinius Minor, *Panegyricus* 6.2; 63.1; *Epistulae* 3.18.2.

[19] There was also a popular notion that the emperor should serve as model for all of his subjects. Velleius Paterculus 1.126.3–5, for example, already expresses this sentiment. So too the *SC de Cn. Pisone* (lines 90 ff.), with the comments of M. Griffin, 'The Senate's Story', *Journal of Roman Studies* 87 (1997), 256. See further J. Lendon, *Empire of Honour. The Art of Government in the Roman World* (Oxford 1997), 129–130 and Wardle 1998, op. cit. (n. 6), 69–70 on this matter. And in a similar fashion, one could learn from non-Roman potentates: C. Julius Hyginus wrote a book called *De excellentibus ducibus exterarum gentium*. See M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur bis zum Gesetzgebungswerk des Kaisers Justinian,* Teil 2: *Die römische Literatur in der Zeit der Monarchie bis auf Hadrian* (München 1935[4]), 368–369.

The final portion of the so-called *lex de imperio Vespasiani* has been preserved for us by a bronze tablet.[20] This document demonstrates forcefully the ways in which exemplarity – in this case, the punctilious listing of certain prerogatives held by selected former emperors, that is, what we would call precedents – served both to establish and to transmit constitutional realities for the Romans.

Let us start at the top of the tablet. It seems likely that the first extant clause, in its original and complete form, granted Vespasian the right not only to conclude treaties with foreign states, but that here was imparted to him also the prerogative of declaring war and making peace.[21] In so far as Vespasian is concerned, we see clearly the one and only legal rationale for his ability to conduct this particular business: the *lex de imperio* says explicitly that he could act in this realm because Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius had been able to do so. In short, this statute makes this prerogative constitutionally legitimate for Vespasian purely by virtue of the exemplary capacity in this respect of three earlier emperors.

Now, various scholars have been less than content with this apparent state of things, and have thus preferred to suppose the existence of some piece of legislation, albeit an unknown one, which initially bestowed these particular powers on Augustus. Legality, in other words, has been thought ultimately to have rested not upon exemplary powers held by exemplary predecessors, but instead, somehow necessarily to have derived from an original statutory act of some kind – an act which was subsequently reaffirmed time and again in a tralactician transmission of power.[22]

Mommsen, in his *Staatsrecht*, approached the matter in a roughly similar fashion, though his sense of the ultimate origin of the emperor's war powers is worth setting out:

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[20] *CIL* 6.930 = *ILS* 244 = *FIRA*^{2} I no. 15 = M. Crawford (ed.), *Roman Statutes* (London 1996), no. 39. The *lex de imperio* is included as an appendix at the end of this article. The text there is, with one or two slight alterations, that of Crawford from *Roman Statutes*.

[21] See, e.g., P. Brunt, 'Lex de imperio Vespasiani', *Journal of Roman Studies* 67 (1977), 103, or F. Hurlet, 'La *Lex de imperio Vespasiani* et la légitimité augustéenne', *Latomus* 52 (1993), 268–269.

[22] Note J. Rich, *Cassius Dio. The Augustan Settlement* (Warminster 1990), 150 (with earlier literature). Strabo 17.3.25 and Cassius Dio 53.17.5 both say that Augustus could unilaterally make peace and war. They provide, though, no legal basis whatsoever for this right.

> Auf keinem Verwaltungsgebiet ist das Regiment des Princeps weniger in feste für uns erkennbare Formen gefasst als auf dem der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten so wie der davon unzertrennlichen höchsten militärischen Direction (…) Es bleibt daher hier fast nur eine Lücke in der Organisation zu bezeichnen, die factisch durch die persönliche Thätigkeit des Princeps auszufüllen war. Ueber Krieg und Frieden entscheidet der Princeps allein. Es muss dieses Recht gleich bei der Constituirung des Imperiums dem Augustus nach dem Muster Caesars in dem Bestallungsgesetz förmlich übertragen und seitdem für jeden Princeps gleichmässig wiederholt worden sein.[23]

Now, what Mommsen argues here is actually quite interesting. For in the absence of any evidence whatsoever regarding the manner in which Augustus came to be authorized to declare war and to make peace, he does not resort to suggesting some specific piece of lost legislation from the Augustan age that sought to initiate this prerogative. Instead, and in what amounts to typical Roman fashion, Mommsen recruits an earlier example. He adduces Cassius Dio, who tells us that Caesar, when named dictator after the battle of Pharsalus, was awarded the prerogative of making war and peace by the senate.[24] But of course, since Augustus inherited neither a clearly discernable position, nor any authorized prerogatives of any kind from Caesar, that which the senate had sanctioned in the case of his divine father could serve only in one way to justify the son's doings: as an *exemplum*.[25] Thus, what we are dealing with, on Mommsen's interpretation of the situation, is the tralactician passing down, from Caesar to Augustus, and then onward, not most precisely of a statutory prerogative, but of what we would call a precedent; the Romans would have understood this in the context of an *exemplum*. In Mommsen's words, Augustus had the power to declare war "nach dem Muster Caesars." This parallels quite nicely, of course, the way the matter was put in the *lex de imperio Vespasiani*, namely, *uti licuit divo Augusto*, etc.

But be that as it may, we must frankly admit that the Romans, at least when they set out in A.D. 69 formally to announce the 'constitutional' powers of Vespasian, carefully employed a particular device for

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[23] Mommsen 1887, op. cit. (n. 13), 954.

[24] Cassius Dio 42.20.1.

[25] It would appear that Mommsen, in talking of the "Bestallungsgesetz," was presuming for Augustus something like the *lex de imperio Vespasiani*. He also seems to presume that this act codified the first emperor's war powers, though again, working on the basis of the *exemplum* set by Caesar.

making legitimate these powers. That device consisted of the exemplary prerogatives of exemplary earlier emperors. Perhaps there were statutory acts of one kind or another lurking somewhere. Yet even if that is so, the composers of the *lex de imperio Vespasiani* chose pointedly not to mention these. They preferred to construct imperial legitimacy, in their document, solely and entirely on the basis of the *exemplum*.

To say this, however, raises a serious matter. Caligula and Nero obviously were able to start wars and make peace. But they also, obviously, were not suited to function as examples of emperors who could do so. What is more, in two of the eight clauses – and these are generally presumed to be tralactician, i.e., these are not thought to involve powers newly established for Vespasian –, no emperor appears as rationale for the transmission of the privilege in question (clauses III & IV).

Peter Brunt has pretty convincingly explained this phenomenon. He suggests that the powers bestowed by the clauses III and IV were for the first time wielded in an explicit fashion by Nero, and that this emperor, since official memory sanctions had been passed against him, just could not be mentioned.[26] Now, if Brunt is right about this, then we must allow that the composers of the *lex de imperio* favored utter silence about constitutional legitimacy when they could cite only a *malum exemplum*. For if there had been (say) a law or a decree of the senate that bestowed these rights on Nero, the composers of the *lex de imperio* surely will have known it, and they could easily have mentioned it instead of the monster. But again, it is crucial to notice that in declaring Vespasian's powers, the drafters of the *lex de imperio* did not exercise any such option. In short, it was apparently preferable to them to provide no explicit basis at all for the 'juridical' legitimacy of a given imperial prerogative, than it would have been to resort, even in some oblique manner, to a bad egg as the trend-setter.[27]

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[26] Brunt 1977, op. cit. (n. 21), 103–106.

[27] An alternative posibility, which cannot and should not be ruled out, is that these powers were indeed for the first time bestowed officially on Vespasian, i.e., that there simply was no earlier *exemplum* to cite – or to ignore. It is also to be noted that the matter of 'good' as versus 'bad' emperors is now gaining serious reconsideration, and that the making of such distinctions requires nuance. In particular, we are now learning to be much more careful as regards the various groups within Roman society, and their individual likes and dislikes with respect to emperors. See, e.g., W. Meyer-Zwiffelhoffer, 'Ein Visionär auf dem Thron? Kaiser Commodus, Hercules Romanus', *Klio* 88 (2006), 189–215. Cf. also M. Coudry and T. Späth (eds.), *L'invention des grands hommes de la Rome antique. Die Konstruktion der grossen Männer Altroms* (Paris 2001), 9. For a larger context, into which this kind of question can be fit, see R. Fowler and

In any case, whatever we do with clauses III and IV, we must face the plain fact that two emperors, who certainly had the same powers as did Augustus, or Tiberius, or Claudius, or Vespasian, never get mentioned in this document. They are not mentioned presumably because they were perceived as 'bad' emperors, hence, pernicious *exempla*. This raises the larger problem of what might be called the 'slipperiness' of *exempla*. For the present purposes, perhaps it will suffice to remark that the Romans developed mechanisms for coping with the multivalent tendencies of their examples.[28] Nonetheless, it must be said that the constitutional realities set in motion by engaging *exempla* in the manner I am now suggesting the Romans did, will have been rather typically Roman. That is, these realities will thus have become in various regards highly maleable, even as they preached a doctrine of utter rigidity.

So, thus far we have seen Augustus prescribe that *exempla* bequeathed by him should light the way for his successors in the purple; and indeed, his tone approaches something more like one that intends (or hopes) to be binding, rather than simply suggestive. We have also seen various authors stressing the notion that 'good' emperors, qua *exempla*, ought ideally to guide the behavior of subsequent princes. With the *lex de imperio Vespasiani*, I have attempted to show that this was not merely talk, that we are not, in placing *exempla* on this particular pedestal, engaging in idle theorizing about the manner in which the Principate ideally functioned. For let us remember: the one and only document remaining to us, and via which we can observe the imperial office as it is legally bestowed upon a man, shows his prerogatives as emperor being grounded explicitly and solely upon the *exempla* set by 'good' predecessors. There is no indication of any other method by which the exercise of imperial power could be justified, or reined in. Tacitus, as usual, was succinct on the matter. Of the senate bestowing the purple

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O. Hekster, 'Imagining kings: From Persia to Rome', in idem (eds.), *Imaginary Kings. Royal Images in the Ancient Near East, Greece and Rome* (Stuttgart 2005), 9–38. Furthermore, the attempts at abolition of memory are crucial to these matters. See S. Benoist, 'Martelage et *damnatio memoriae*: une introduction', *Cahiers Glotz* 14 (2003), 231–240, idem, 'Titulatures impériales et *damnatio memoriae*. L'enseignment des inscriptions matrelées', *Cahiers Glotz* 15 (2004), 175–189, and now H. Flower, *The Art of Forgetting. Disgrace and Oblivion in Roman Political Culture* (Chapel Hill 2006). Finally, the public nature of political discourse in the Roman world just generally, an essential element in all of the above, has recently been examined broadly by G. Sumi, *Ceremony and Power. Performing Politics in Rome between Republic and Empire* (Ann Arbor 2005).

[28] The difficulties of retaining control over *exempla* is one of Lowrie's significant areas of interest, and she will offer much valuable material on this topic (see above, n. 8).

on Vespasian, he wrote: *cuncta principibus solita Vespasiano decernit*.[29] What Tacitus so succinctly describes is just exactly what the *lex de imperio* shows us in action.

If, then, we are justified in supposing that there is quite a bit more than mere 'talk' to the discourse about imperial behavior resting on obedience to appropriate *exempla*, then another strain of 'talk' in the literature deserves our attention. We have all been brought up on the notion that a *maius imperium*, in tandem with *tribunicia potestas*, provided the bedrock of the emperor's station. However, there existed a line of reasoning in the ancient literature, which gave pride of place to the *exemplum* quite specifically as versus *imperium*. Velleius Paterculus at one point sums up the happiness of the new era under Tiberius. There is no longer strife in the Roman political community; justice and equity have been restored; the price of grain is finally decent; the imperial peace has been spread far and wide; brigands are under control, etc. This mini-panegyric comes to an end thus:

> For the best prince teaches his citizens how properly to behave by behaving rightly himself, since whereas he is the greatest with respect to *imperium*, he is even greater by virtue of the *exemplum* he sets.[30]

It would perhaps be unwise to push Velleius' thought too far. On the other hand, he is not alone in insinuating this notion that exemplary behavior was somehow more important than *imperium* in grounding the imperial *statio*. For example, Pliny, again in his *Panegyric*, writes the following:

> You need only continue as you are, Caesar, and the principles of your conduct will have the same effective power as a censorship. Indeed, an emperor's life is a censorship, and a true perpetual one; this is what guides and directs us, for *exemplum* is what we need more than *imperium*. Fear is unreliable as a teacher of morals. Men learn better from examples, which have the great merit of proving that their advice is practicable.[31]

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[29] Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.3.3.

[30] Velleius Paterculus 2.126.5: *nam facere recte cives suos princeps optimus faciendo docet, cumque sit imperio maximus, exemplo maior est.*

[31] Plinius Minor, *Panegyricus* 45.6: *perge modo, Caesar, et vim effectumque censurae tuum propositum tui actus obeinebunt. nam vita principis censura est eaque perpetua: ad hanc dirigimur, ad hanc convertimur, nec tam imperio nobis opus est quam exemplo. quippe infidelis recto magister est metus. melius homines exemplis docentur, quae in primis hoc in se boni habent, quod adprobant quae praecipiunt fieri posse.*

Tacitus too makes what might be comprehended as a nod in this direction. Of the Germans, he writes the following:

> They elect kings for their nobility, military leaders for their martial courage. Nor do the kings have an infinite and utterly free power. And the military leaders stand out because of the *exemplum* they set, more than because of their *imperium*, if they are quick and conspicuous and head up the battle line.[32]

Given all that has thus far been argued here about the role of the *exemplum* in defining and confining the governmental prerogatives of emperors, when Velleius, Pliny, and Tacitus then all insinuate the notion that an example should somehow take precedence even over *imperium*, what exactly are we to think? Although this might sound like highfalutin talk, the fancy stuff of literature, a suggestion utterly foreign to the real world of quotidian government, I would nevertheless like to suggest, and to do so especially in the context of the Romans gradually becoming increasingly distanced from the realities of their Republican traditions, that we should give very serious thought to understanding the *exemplum* precisely as one of the most important constitutional principles of the imperial regime.

Now, were we to plump for this supposition, some explanation would be in order. Why, in other words, should the Romans have had recourse to this particular device in fashioning the body of rules, regulations, or understandings that could justify the emperor in doing the things he did? Let me just briefly sketch an explanation for this choice.

First, we must always keep in mind the kind of authority wielded just generally by the *exemplum* in the Roman context. It lay at the very basis of the education had by the Roman elite, and was engaged most everywhere throughout the cosmos inhabited by those people. Thus, from a Roman point of view, we might justifiably ask a question: Why, a priori, should *exempla* not have had the potential to function precisely in something like a constitutionally normative fashion?[33]

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[32] Tacitus, *Germania* 7.1: *Reges ex nobilitate, duces ex virtute sumunt. nec regibus infinita ac libera potestas, et duces exemplo potius quam imperio, si pompti, si conspicui, si ante aciem agant, admiratione praesunt.*

[33] With respect to *exempla* and the education of (elite) Romans, cf. R. Saller, *Patriarchy, property and death in the Roman family* (Cambridge 1994), 108–110. And for a sense of how the same examples might be employed to 'educate' the masses, cf. N. Horsfall, *La cultura della* plebs romana (Barcelona 1996), 46, as well as F. Millar, *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic* (Ann Arbor 1998), 88–92 (for historical examples used to persuade

Second, we must remember several things about the Republican 'constitution': a) it was unwritten, which left plenty of room for debate about its proper nature and rightful content, along with significant leeway for the invention and/or re-invention of many of its aspects; b) this constitution was comprised, ultimately, of a lengthy concatenation of many ad hoc developments of different sorts; and c) especially in the context of these first two points, this Republican 'constitution' was perfectly willing to employ *exempla* in precisely the kind of normative fashion I am now suggesting for the imperial period. In short, then, *exempla* from the remote past, along with more recently arisen ones, were important elements of the complex that we ultimately envision as the Roman Republican constitution.[34]

Thirdly, with the coming of empire, this Republican constitution had, obviously, to change in numerous ways. However, since there was not supposed to be an emperor, and since the official story about the coming-to-be of the *princeps* trumpeted restoration of the good old Republic, there could be no taste for laying out a nicely defined set of rules and regulations about the new 'Zwitterding,' as Theodor Mommsen at one point labeled the imperial system of government. For to have defined it too closely would have been to admit it too openly. Thus, like the *res publica* of old, the new imperial system grew sporadically. And when an emperor desired to do something new, something that was not so clearly or easily derived from his *imperium* or tribunician power, he would both set a new *exemplum*, and, most likely, seek an imprimatur of it from the people or the senate. Yet, as we have seen with the *lex de imperio Vespasiani*, when later generations searched for the origin of the privilege in question, they might very well be more inclined to cite

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the *plebs*). Cf. also above, n. 12. For a sense of the overall place of *exempla* in Roman culture and society, note (e.g.) D. Selden, '*Caveat lector*: Catullus and the Rhetoric of Performance', in R. Hexter and D. Selden (eds.), *Innovations of Antiquity* (New York 1992), 493: "Other Indo-European people tended to encode traditional politico-religious values in fantastic narratives about the cosmos, heroes, and the gods. In Italy, however, the Latin tribes projected this common heritage onto the plane of human history, which transpired largely as a sequence of exemplary individuals." And again, the comments of Walter 2004, op. cit. (n. 8), passim are highly relevant.

[34] On *exempla* as normative, see K.-J. Hölkeskamp, '*Exempla* und *mos maiorum*. Überlegungen zum kollektiven Gedächtnis der Nobilität', in H.-J. Gehrke and A. Möller (eds.), *Vergangenheit und Lebenswelt. Soziale Kommunikation, Traditionsbildung und historisches Bewußtsein* (Tübingen 1996), 316–318; cf. also Walter 2004, op. cit. (n. 8), 55. With respect to Rome's unwritten constitution, and the force of the Roman past in the Roman present, cf. R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford 1939), 152–153.

an exemplary holder of the power, rather than any statutory act that had ultimately endorsed it.[35] In other words, ratification by people or senate must surely have been important; but, perhaps this was indeed less weighty, in the final analysis, than the *exemplum* itself, which had thereby been awarded a seal of approval.[36]

Let me summarize quickly these points. The Romans had long been used to a rather lose form of constitution, they were in no position to create something more well-defined or better-organized for their new form of government, and beyond this, they were terribly attached to the *exemplum* as a mechanism for explaining why they did do, or should do, or could do, many (if not most) things altogether.[37] Against

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[35] One might think here, e.g., of a roughly parallel situation: Claudius' marriage to Agrippina. As Tacitus puts it (*Annales* 12.5.1): *C. Pompeio Q. Veranio consulibus pactum inter Claudium et Agrippinam matrimonium iam fama, iam amore inlicito firmabatur; necdum celebrare sollemnia nuptiarum audebant, nullo exemplo deductae in domum patrui fratris filiae*. L. Vitellius then entered the senate, and asked the *patres* to see to it that (*Annales* 12.6.4): *statueretur immo documentum, quo uxorem imperator acciperet*. A general clamor in favor of the marriage followed, at which point Claudius took the reins (*Annales* 12.7.3): *senatumque ingressus decretum postulat quo iustae inter patruos fratrumque filias nuptiae etiam in posterum statuerentur*. Roughly the same scenario is reported by Suetonius, *Vita Claudii* 26.3 (where we also hear that Claudius tried to persuade others to follow his *exemplum*). Gaius pretty clearly reflects the procedure described by Tacitus and Suetonius, when he writes (*Institutiones* 1.62): *Fratris filiam uxorem ducere licet, idque primum in usum venit cum divus Claudius Agrippinan fratris sui filiam uxorem duxisset. sororis vero filiam uxorem ducere non licet. et haec ita principalibus constitutionibus significantur*. Scholars differ somewhat in just exactly where they lay the stress. For example, S. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage.* Iusti Coniuges *From the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Oxford 1991), 38 writes that, "Claudius had a law passed," whereas J. Crook, *Law and Life of Rome, 90 B.C.–A.D. 212* (Ithaca 1967), 100 says that such marriages were allowed "on the precedent of Claudius and Agrippina." In any case, what is clear is that Claudius' intent, and initial action, preceded and elicited any and all statutory regulations. In short, the emperor set a new *exemplum*, and the *exemplum* then resulted in statutes. And when Gaius chose to talk of the legal origins of the practice, he adduced first and foremost the exemplary actions of Claudius and Agrippina, saying that this was subsequently fixed up by imperial constitutions. So, I would guess, did things usually go. Constantius would eventually reverse the Claudian *exemplum*, and preferred to make such marriages a capital offense. See P. Corbett, *The Roman Law of Marriage* (Oxford 1930), 49.

[36] Pliny the Elder, for example, precisely because there did not exist proper documentation on the nature of the imperial political system, employed *exempla* to describe the government and its functioning. On this, see F. de Oliveira, *Les Idées Politiques et Morales de Pline l'Ancien* (Coimbra 1992), 119. Note also the approving sentiment of Tacitus with regard to a commander who executes the leaders of a mutiny (*Annales* 1.38.2): *iusserat id M'. Ennius castrorum praefectus, bono magis exemplo quam concesso iure*.

[37] For a succinct statement of the chief concerns facing anyone examining the Republican constitution – a statement that works quite nicely for the imperial period too –, see A. Lintott, *The Constitution of the Roman Republic* (Oxford 1999), 2: "The fact that the Republic was a natural growth creates also the fundamental problem in analysing it. It was not a written constitution, nor was it entirely unwritten. Two questions

the background of such considerations, we might remember Ronald Syme once having written that the Romans, "never put out a systematic defence of the new system of government." As he goes on to say:

> There was a simple remedy: leave it to the educated class to devise formulations of acceptance. Willing agents were to hand, some convinced and some ingenuous, as well as the 'falsi ac festinantes.' The apologia thus emerging was in large measure the creation of senators, and a product of tacit collusion.[38]

In other words, the Romans found themselves engaged in various conversations, all of these attempting to explain why emperors could do what they quite obviously were doing, much of which could not be readily explained by the mere possession of *imperium* or *tribunicia potestas*, and much of which was, in traditional legal or constitutional terms, highly innovative. The early imperial Romans found themselves inventing and legitimizing the Principate as they went.

A number of avenues opened up for this explanatory project. There was, to be sure, one strain of thinking that involved precisely the old constitutional powers of the venerable Republican magistracies, it grounding much of what an emperor did precisely in his *imperium* or in his *tribunicia potestas*.[39] On the other hand, an emperor might be figured as a god, or as the vicegerent of the gods; and this ought, on some level, to have given him pretty broad powers altogether.[40] Matthew Roller has recently pointed out the muscle of imagining the emperor as the father of a family, or as the master of a group of slaves.[41] Again, in both of these cases, the underlying assumption had to be that the so-conceived individual could do pretty well whatever he liked with, or to, his subjects. Or, the emperor was the *princeps*, the first man in Rome, and as such,

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may make the problem clearer. First, how could Romans during the Republic find out what was proper constitutional practice in any particular political situation? Secondly, what were the sources of law, i.e. what was the authority which sanctioned a given constitutional practice?"

[38] R. Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy* (Oxford 1986), 439; 441. Syme then went on to delineate ten distinct formulations of acceptance .

[39] Nota bene, however, that this kind of thinking tends to be voiced much more by modern scholars than by ancient authors, who pay, relatively speaking, rather little attention to such 'constitutional' justifications of power, or powers. This is not, I think, without significance.

[40] See R. Fears, Princeps a diis electus. *The Divine Election of the Emperor as a Political Concept at Rome* (Rome 1977).

[41] M. Roller, *Constructing Autocracy. Aristocrats and Emperors in Julio-Claudian Rome* (Princeton 2001), 213–287.

wielded far and away the greatest *auctoritas* in the community. Again, on this reading of his person and position, the man at the top would notionally be possessed of an effectively absolute power.[42]

These different configurations of the imperial position co-existed happily. They were not mutually exclusive. Moreover, they had something in common. Each of these models imagines the emperor, ultimately, as an absolute monarch. The terrific power of a father, a master, a god, or the *princeps* is plain. We must also see, however, that the man who possessed *imperium maius*, and who was not tribune, yet held *tribunicia potestas* for life, also stood absolutely alone in the Roman political system. Thus, even in the 'constitutional' construction of the imperial position, there resided a very strong element of raw autocracy. On the other hand, the conceptual avenue we have just been exploring had the potential to function rather differently – and therein, I would suggest, lay its crucial importance, and attraction, for the Romans.

Let us remember an article written a quarter of a century ago by Andrew Wallace-Hadrill. He began by laying particular stress on the inherent ambivalence of the imperial position, and the traditional interpretation of that ambivalence: the man at the top was on the one hand an absolute monarch, and on the other hand, a Republican magistrate. Wallace-Hadrill then demonstrated a kind of third aspect to the ambivalent nature of the imperial position, namely, the emperor as mere citizen – the *princeps* could be viewed as neither a king nor some kind of utterly extraordinary magistrate. Let me just quote the concluding paragraph of that article:

> While it is true that under the Principate some emperors used ceremonial to set a gulf between themselves and their subjects, it is more striking that others used a ritual of condescension to represent themselves as simple citizens. It is hasty to dismiss such a ritual as a sham or charade. It was enacted in all seriousness, because it served to articulate certain deeper truths that, for a period, mattered to the society over which these emperors ruled: the continuity with the republican past; the dependence of the emperor on the consent of the upper orders; but above all the use of the social structure of a city-state to organize and unify the disparate peoples of the empire.[43]

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[42] The emperor as Roman society's greatest benefactor plays here an important role. See R. Saller, *Personal patronage under the early Empire* (Cambridge 1982), 41–78.

[43] A. Wallace-Hadrill, '*Civilis Princeps*: Between Citizen and King', *Journal of Roman Studies* 72 (1982), 32–48 at 48.

Now, Wallace-Hadrill sees some emperors as having played the autocrat, while others configured themselves as citizen-princes. I would say that most emperors played all of these parts – king, magistrate, and citizen –; and those who were better at being emperor shifted from one role to the other without much effort or trouble.

Again, autocracy was plainly on show in personae like the father of the fatherland, or master, or god, or the first man. And again, I would argue that autocracy emerged just as plainly, in fact, from the Republican aspects of the new position, that is, from what we have traditionally perceived as the aspects of the monarchy that made it 'constitutional'. In other words, it seems to me that not even the Republican constitutional construction of the imperial position did much to save the Romans from autocracy. Only one thing did, and that is what Wallace-Hadrill so magnificently revealed. In his role as simple citizen, the emperor could not be perceived to possess absolute power of any kind. Only here was his potential for action somehow truly akin to that of his subjects.

I would argue, then, that the one way in which the Romans might seek refuge from the awful visage of their absolute monarch, was to clothe him as a *civilis princeps*. Having done this, what they (and he) of course discovered was that he could not, like a father, or a master, or a god, or the *princeps* with the greatest *imperium* and tribunician power and *auctoritas*, do effectively whatever he wanted. The *civilis princeps* was theoretically roped in by the very same mechanisms that might bind any and every citizen: hence, *exempla*, in this context, were very powerful tools for moderating imperial behavior of all sorts. The third path for the Romans, and the only path that in some sense really allowed them to banish absolutism, was that of constructing a civil prince, whose every word and deed was carefully fettered by the good examples handed down from good predecessors – or, indeed, bequeathed by the good men of the Roman past. And we would do well to remember that this third path is precisely the one we find reflected in the sole surviving official record of an imperial installment procedure: the *lex de imperio Vespasiani*.

Let me close by citing an edict issued by Augustus perhaps at the time of the magnificent *ludi saeculares* in 17 B.C. He wrote this:

> Would that it be permitted me to set the State safe and sound on its base, and to reap the fruit of that for which I strive: let me be called the author of the very best constitution, and as I die, let me carry with me

> the hope that the foundations of the State which I have laid will remain in their place.[44]

As he asserted in the *Res Gestae*, Augustus set about achieving these goals largely by resurrecting many *exempla* from his past, and by establishing many others to guide his posterity. When the conscript fathers, half a century later, aimed to bestow the purple on Vespasian, they officially established and commemorated his imperial prerogatives by recalling the things which exemplary princes from their past had been empowered to do. For Augustus, and for the Romans of the early Empire, the *exemplum* was, in very real and very large part, the fundament of the *res publica*. They preferred to build their imperial house on this foundation, I would argue, because in this way, and in this way alone, were they able to coax the atmosphere of their habitation to exude liberty, rather than autocracy.

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[44] Suetonius, *Vita Augusti* 28.2: *Ita mihi salvam ac sospitem rem publicam sistere in sua sede liceat, atque eius rei fructum percipere, quem peto, ut optimi status auctor dicar, et moriens ut feram mecum spem, mansura in vestigio suo fundamenta rei publicae quae iecero.*

Appendix: The Lex de imperio Vespasiani

(I) [– bellum pacem ?]
foedusve cum quibus volet facere liceat, ita uti licuit divo Aug(usto),
Ti(berio) Iulio Caesari Aug(usto), Tiberioque Claudio Caesari Aug(usto) Germanico;

(II) utique ei senatum habere, relationem facere, remittere, senatus consulta per relationem discessionemque facere liceat,
ita uti licuit divo Aug(usto), Ti(berio) Iulio Caesari Aug(usto), Ti(berio) Claudio Caesari Augusto Germanico;

(III) utique, cum ex voluntate auctoritateve iussu mandatuve eius praesenteve eo senatus habebitur, omnium rerum ius perinde habeatur, servetur, ac si e lege senatus edictus esset habereturque;

(IV) utique, quos magistratum, potestatem, imperium curationemve
cuius rei petentes senatui populoque Romano commendaverit, quibusque suffragationem suam dederit, promiserit, eorum comiti<i>s quibusque extra ordinem ratio habeatur;

(V) utique ei fines pomerii proferre, promovere, cum ex re publica
censebit esse, liceat, ita uti licuit Ti(berio) Claudio Caesari Aug(usto)
Germanico;

(VI) utique, quaecunque ex usu rei publicae maiestate divinarum, huma<na>rum, publicarum privatarumque rerum esse
censebit, ei agere, facere ius potestasque sit, ita uti divo Aug(usto),
Tiberioque Iulio Caesari Aug(usto), Tiberioque Claudio Caesari Aug(usto) Germanico fuit;

(VII) utique, quibus legibus plebeive scitis scriptum fuit ne divus Aug(ustus),
Tiberiusve Iulius Caesar Aug(ustus), Tiberiusque Claudius Caesar Aug(ustus)
Germanicus tenerentur, iis legibus plebisque scitis Imp(erator) Caesar

25 Vespasianus solutus sit, quaeque ex quaque lege, rogatione
divum Aug(ustum), Tiberiumve Iulium Caesarem Au(gustum), Tiberiumve
Claudium Caesarem Aug(ustum) Germanicum facere oportuit,
ea omnia Imp(eratori) Caesari Vespasiano Aug(usto) facere liceat;

(VIII) utique, quae ante hanc legem rogatam acta, gesta,
30 decreta, imperata ab Imperatore Caesare Vespasiano Aug(usto)
iussu mandatuve eius a quoque sunt, ea perinde iusta rataq(ue)
sint ac si populi plebisve iussu acta essent.

Sanctio.

Si quis huiusce legis ergo adversus leges, rogationes plebisve scita
35 senatusve consulta fecit, fecerit, sive, quod eum ex lege, rogatione
plebisve scito s(enatus)ve c(onsulto) facere oportebit, non fecerit huius legis
ergo, id ei ne fraudi esto, neve quis ob eam rem populo dare debeto,
neve cui de ea re actio neve iudicatio esto, neve quis de ea re apud
[s]e agi sinito.

À PROPOS DE L'ÉDIT DE GALLIEN

Pierre Cosme

Il y a trente ans L. de Blois abordait dans *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* la question controversée de l'exclusion des sénateurs de l'armée par cet empereur[1]. Ce sujet faisait l'objet à peu près en même temps de la réflexion de M. Christol qui publia son *Essai sur l'évolution des carrières sénatoriales dans la seconde moitié du IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.* en 1986[2]. Tous deux insistaient sur le rôle croissant dans l'appareil d'État romain de cette époque des officiers équestres le plus souvent issus du centurionat et originaires des provinces illyriennes. Ceux-ci étaient en effet censés détenir une meilleure expérience du terrain que les sénateurs de plus en plus coupés des réalités militaires. Depuis, cette hypothèse a été confirmée par les travaux d'H. Devijver qui, dans son étude sur 'La *Prosopographia militiarum equestrium*' comme contribution à l'histoire sociale et économique du principat, publiée en 1987[3], remarquait déjà que l'évolution du recrutement géographique de l'armée avait connu des rythmes différents selon les échelons. Les soldats du rang ont en effet été assez rapidement recrutés localement, tandis que les officiers supérieurs continuaient à être originaires d'Italie et des provinces les plus romanisées ou hellénisées. Cependant, les officiers équestres devaient rester vraisemblablement plus proches des légionnaires dans la mesure où la géographie de leur recrutement a connu une évolution beaucoup plus proche de celle des soldats, comme le suggèrent les tableaux dressés par H. Devijver dans son article du second volume des Mavors intitulé "The Geographical Origins of Equestrian Officers"[4]. C'était particu-

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[1] L. de Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* (Leiden 1976), 37–87.

[2] M. Christol, *Essai sur l'évolution des carrières sénatoriales dans la seconde moitié du IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.* (Paris 1986), 35–48.

[3] H. Devijver, 'La *Prosopographia militiarum equestrium*', dans T. Hackens et P. Marchetti (eds.), *Histoire économique de l'Antiquité*, (Louvain-la-Neuve 1987), 107–122 à 115 [Réimprimé dans H. Devijver, *The Equestrian Officers of the Roman Imperial Army*, Mavors 6 (Amsterdam 1989), 396–411].

[4] H. Devijver, dans *The Future of the Roman Army Studies. Papers from the Colloquium held at the Institute of Archaeology, 20th May 1989. In honour of Professor Eric Birley*, Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology, 26 (London 1989), 107–126 [Réimprimé dans *The Equestrian Officers of the Roman Imperial Army.* II, Mavors 9 (Stuttgart 1992), 109–128].

lièrement le cas des anciens centurions admis dans l'ordre équestre qui représentaient, selon M. Christol, la majorité des officiers équestres placés à la tête des légions à partir du règne de Gallien. L. de Blois avait d'ailleurs déjà émis l'hypothèse que la promotion de ces chevaliers romains avait sans doute contribué à combler un fossé qui s'était peu à peu creusé entre les légionnaires et les officiers sénatoriaux[5].

Or, ce point de vue vient d'être remis en cause par Y. Le Bohec dans le premier numéro de la *Revue des Études Militaires Anciennes* paru en 2004[6]. Dans son article, celui-ci doute d'abord de l'existence d'un édit daté de 262 qui aurait formellement privé les sénateurs de commandement militaire : Gallien aurait simplement cessé au tout début des années 260 de pourvoir les postes vacants en désignant de nouveaux cadres militaires sénatoriaux. Il n'aurait fait que poursuivre la politique de ses prédécesseurs qui, depuis la fin du règne de Septime Sévère, avaient investi des chevaliers de commandements militaires extraordinaires. Il est vrai que la disparition des officiers issus de l'ordre sénatorial semble avoir été très progressive et ne paraît donc guère avoir coïncidé avec une décision ponctuelle, comme la promulgation d'un édit : on ne connaît plus de tribun laticlave après 260, plus de légat de légion après la mort de Gallien en 268, mais des légats sénatoriaux demeurent attestés dans les provinces impériales consulaires jusqu'à l'époque tétrarchique comme le constatait déjà M. Christol dans son *Essai sur les carrières sénatoriales dans la 2e moitié du IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.*[7] Si l'édit il y a eu, il n'aurait concerné que la hiérarchie interne de la légion et non le gouvernement des provinces. D'autre part, selon Y. Le Bohec, les raisons de Gallien auraient été surtout politiques : en excluant les sénateurs de l'armée, celui-ci aurait voulu les priver de moyens d'usurper le pouvoir impérial. Il envisage également une jalousie qu'aurait ressentie l'empereur envers les sénateurs d'après une allusion d'Aurelius Victor[8]. Mais les motivations psychologiques de Gallien s'avèrent difficiles à mesurer aujourd'hui et s'il avait voulu vraiment enlever tout moyen d'action politique aux sénateurs on ne comprend pas qu'il leur ait laissé le gouvernement des provinces impériales consulaires.

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[5] De Blois 1976, op. cit. (n. 1), 40–44, 52–57, 67–68, 70–71 et 85.

[6] Y. Le Bohec, « Gallien et l'encadrement sénatorial de l'armee romaine », *Revue des Études Militaires Anciennes* 1 (2004), 123–132.

[7] Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 44–60.

[8] Aurelius Victor, *Livre des Césars* 33–34.

La réouverture du débat sur la disparition des officiers clarissimes offre donc l'occasion de s'interroger sur la notion de compétence au sens d'aptitude militaire. Celle-ci représente en effet un argument central aussi bien dans la démonstration de L. de Blois et de M. Christol que dans celle de Y. Le Bohec. Les deux premiers estiment que les chevaliers issus de l'armée l'emportaient dans ce domaine sur les sénateurs. Pour Y. Le Bohec en revanche, l'art de la guerre n'avait pas radicalement changé au point de rendre les sénateurs inaptes au commandement militaire. Ces divergences nous invitent à une réflexion approfondie sur ce concept d'aptitude militaire que je suggérais déjà l'an dernier dans un colloque à la mémoire de H.-G. Pflaum[9]. Pour prolonger ces remarques, je souhaiterais cerner de plus près cette notion de compétence en essayant de faire la part des continuités et des ruptures survenues au troisième siècle dans les conditions concrètes du combat.

Parmi les éléments que je retenais dans cette précédente communication, on peut s'intéresser aux relations à établir entre les modifications intervenues dans l'attribution des commandements et de nouvelles façons de combattre. En d'autres termes, il faudrait étudier non seulement l'armée mais aussi la guerre. De ce point de vue, les inscriptions découvertes dans les quartiers d'hiver de la IIe Légion Parthique à Apamée de Syrie, publiées par J.-Ch. Balty et W. Van Rengen, sont venues enrichir la documentation militaire romaine du troisième siècle. Une de celles-ci mentionne un *discens phalang(arium)*[10]. Il me semble que ce document peut être mis en perspective avec d'autres témoignages concernant les opérations militaires romaines sur le front oriental. On sait en effet que cette légion créée en 197 a commencé à fréquenter les quartiers d'hiver d'Apamée à l'occasion de l'expédition parthique de Caracalla qui débuta en 214. Or, les récits de Dion Cassius et d'Hérodien évoquent à cette occasion la levée par Caracalla dans les Balkans de recrues qu'il aurait équipées et organisées sur le modèle des phalanges macédoniennes[11]. Dans la terminologie propre à ces écrivains hellénophones à quoi pouvait correspondre l'emploi de ces termes ? Peut-être à des formations plus compactes adaptées à la lutte

[9] P. Cosme, « Qui commandait l'armée romaine ? », dans S. Demougin et al. (eds.), *H.-G. Pflaum, un historien du XXe siècle, Actes du colloque international de Paris du 21 au 23 octobre 2004* (Genève 2006), 137–156.

[10] J.-Ch. Balty, « Apamea in Syria in the second and third centuries A.D. », *Journal of Roman Studies* 78 (1988), 99 et 101.

[11] Dion Cassius, 77.7.1–2 ; Hérodien, 4.8.3.

contre les archers montés et aux cataphractaires parthes. Or, d'autres inscriptions d'Apamée mentionnent dans la Ière cohorte le grade de centurion *pilus posterior*[12] :

> *D(is) M(anibus)/ Aurel(ius) Ingenuis t/esserarius leg(ionis) II Pa/r(thicae) (centuriae) I pil(i) post(erioris) qui uixit an/nos XXXV me(n)sibus V/II diebus X Geminius R/estutus collega et h/eres bene meren/ti fecit.*

L'existence de ce grade remet en cause l'organisation de la Ière cohorte aux effectifs doubles mais répartis dans seulement cinq centuries (donc sans *pilus posterior*) attestée depuis le début du Principat. Depuis cette découverte, épigraphistes et historiens se demandent si ce changement a concerné toutes les légions ou s'il représentait une originalité propre à la IIe Légion Parthique (voire aux trois légions portant ce surnom). Dans la seconde partie de sa réflexion sur la légion romaine comme phalange publiée dans le premier numéro de la *Revue des Études Militaires Anciennes*, E. Wheeler constate que l'existence de ce grade embrouille encore davantage la question de la disposition des légionnaires sur le front[13].

Dans la première partie de cette étude, publiée dans les actes du congrès consacré à Lyon en 2002 à l'armée romaine tardive, E. Wheeler rejetait entièrement les témoignages d'Hérodien et de Dion Cassius comme une pure invention liée au thème de l'Alexandrinisme de Caracalla[14]. Mais je me demande si on ne peut pas plutôt envisager de les considérer comme un indice supplémentaire d'une certaine recomposition de la formation de combat des légionnaires dans les premières décennies du troisième siècle. Autant le nombre évoqué par l'*Histoire Auguste* de trente mille hommes disposés en phalanges par Sévère Alexandre peut paraître fantaisiste comme toute la biographie de cet empereur, autant le nombre de seize mille hommes indiqué par Dion Cassius à propos de la phalange levée par Caracalla mérite de retenir

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[12] J.-Ch. Balty et W. Van Rengen, *Apamée de Syrie. Quartiers d'hiver de la IIe Légion Parthique. Monuments funéraires de la nécropole militaire* (Bruxelles 1992), no. 19 (*AE* 1993, 588); C. Ricci, '*Legio II Parthica*. Una messa a punto', dans Y. Le Bohec (ed.), *Les légions de Rome sous le Haut-Empire: Actes du Congrès de Lyon du 17 au 19 septembre 1998* (Lyon 2000), 401 et W. van Rengen, «La IIe Légion Parthique à Apamée» dans *ibidem*, 409.

[13] E.L. Wheeler, 'The Legion as Phalanx in the Late Empire, Part II', *Revue des Études Militaires Anciennes* 1 (2004), 165.

[14] E.L. Wheeler, 'The Legion as Phalanx in the Late Empire (I)' dans Y. Le Bohec et C. Wolff (eds.), *L'armée romaine de Dioclétien à Valentinien Ier: Actes du Congrès de Lyon du 12 au 14 septembre 2002* (Lyon 2004), 312–313.

l'attention me semble-t-il[15]. En effet si l'on considère que la IIe Légion Parthique avait été formée par Septime Sévère en 197 à partir de recrues italiennes mais aussi de vexillations de légions existantes, au moment de sa campagne parthique de 214 – soit dix-sept ans plus tard – certains de ces légionnaires devaient parvenir au terme de leur service. D'autres étaient morts et il a donc fallu remplacer les effectifs manquants. Or, les inscriptions d'Apamée révèlent que de nombreux soldats étaient justement originaires des Balkans où Caracalla était réputé avoir levé sa phalange selon Dion Cassius et Hérodien[16]. Ces recrues étaient alors venues s'ajouter à des Italiens qui n'avaient pas terminé leur temps de service[17]. Un *supplementum* de seize mille recrues peut paraître exagéré, mais il ne faut pas oublier que d'autres légions ont alors participé aux opérations militaires, comme l'atteste également la documentation épigraphique d'Apamée à propos de la Légion XIIIe *Gemina* venue de Dacie qui hiverna dans la région d'Apamée en 217–218[18], et de la Légion IVe *Scythica* venue du nord de la Syrie pour participer aux opérations militaires en 217[19]. Or, leurs effectifs ont peut-être eux aussi dû être complétés par des *supplementa*, tout comme ceux de certaines ailes, à l'exemple de l'*Ala Contariorum*[20], qui tirait son nom du long épieu (*contus*) dont étaient équipés ses cavaliers. On procédait ainsi avant toute campagne d'envergure. Il s'agit là des premières levées postérieures à l'Édit de Caracalla, comme en témoignent les nombreux *Aurelii* recrutés et il serait logique que la distinction entre les recrutements légionnaire et auxiliaire ait alors commencé à s'estomper. Dion Cassius et Hérodien n'ont donc peut-être pas simplement cédé au lieu commun de l'imitation d'Alexandre en faisant allusion à cette phalange de Caracalla.

Un phénomène similaire de recomposition des lignes de bataille s'était déjà produit à partir de la fin du troisième siècle av. J.-C. quand les Romains avaient ressenti la nécessité, sur les différents fronts où ils étaient alors engagés, de recourir à une subdivision de la légion plus importante et plus autonome que le manipule traditionnel, puisque la cohorte associait les spécialisations de chacune des anciennes lignes de

[15] *Historia Augusta*, *Sévère Alexandre* 50.5 ; Balty 1988, op. cit. (n. 10), 101.
[16] Balty et Van Rengen 1992, op. cit. (n. 12), nos. 4 et 12.
[17] *Ibidem*, no. 14 de Pérouse.
[18] *Ibidem*, no. 6.
[19] *Ibidem*, no. 7.
[20] *Ibidem*, no. 21.

bataille. Celle-ci pouvait plus facilement que le manipule opérer des mouvements complexes ou former un détachement employé à une mission particulière[21]. Il serait alors possible d'envisager une filiation entre le dispositif attesté à Apamée, le combat contre les Perses en 232 évoqué par Hérodien et celui qu'évoque Arrien de Nicomédie dans son *Ordre de marche contre les Alains* postérieur à la guerre contre ce peuple (134–135) à propos de la Légion XVe *Apollinaris* de Satala et d'une vexillation de la Légion XIIe *Fulminata* de Mélitène placées sous son commandement[22]. Le légat de Cappadoce entre 131 et 137 décrit en effet une formation d'infanterie conçue pour résister à une charge de cavaliers cuirassés : à l'intérieur de chaque cohorte les légionnaires devaient être déployés sur huit rangs, les quatre premiers rangs étant armés d'une lance appelée *hasta* et les autres d'un javelot plus léger : la *lancea*. Les légionnaires du premier rang tenaient leur *hasta* inclinée à 45°, l'extrémité du manche en appui sur le sol, de manière à présenter à l'adversaire une rangée dense de pointes. Les légionnaires des trois rangs suivants lançaient leurs *hastae* puis venaient s'arc bouter contre ceux du premier rang. Les légionnaires des rangs suivants envoyaient leurs *lanceae* tandis qu'un neuvième rang d'archers à pied, un dixième rang d'archers montés appuyés par l'artillerie accablaient de leurs projectiles la cavalerie ennemie. Sa charge était arrêtée car les cavaliers survivants ne pouvaient même pas aller à la rencontre de l'infanterie romaine leurs chevaux refusant de prendre cette direction : les flèches et les javelots en affaiblissant les cavaliers les contraignaient à la retraite[23]. Il s'agissait donc d'une formation d'infanterie très compacte qui présentait l'avantage de dissuader les cavaliers ennemis d'approcher mais aussi les Romains de s'enfuir. En même temps cette formation demeurait très statique : d'ailleurs Arrien recommandait une ligne de front ininterrompue sans espace entre les cohortes. Cette formation plus compacte aurait-elle rendu inopérante la spécificité de la première cohorte à cinq centuries et aux effectifs doubles qui remontait,

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[21] Fr. Cadiou, *Les armées romaines dans la péninsule ibérique de la seconde guerre punique à la bataille de Munda (218–45 av. J.-C.)*, thèse dactylographiée (Université de Rennes 2 2001) à paraître aux éditions Ausonius.

[22] Hérodien, 6.5.10 ; P. Vidal-Naquet, *Flavius Arrien entre deux mondes* (Paris 1984), 316–317 ; Wheeler (I) 2004, op. cit. (n. 14), 309–311 et Wheeler (II) 2004, op. cit. (n. 13), 152–159.

[23] A. Goldsworthy, *Les guerres romaines : 281 av. J.-C.–476 ap. J.-C.*, traduction J. Gaillard (Paris 2001), 128–131.

semble-t-il, au premier siècle de notre ère ? A-t-elle aussi exigé des officiers plus particulièrement habitués à combattre de cette façon ? Comme on constate également que les légions parthiques ont d'abord été les seules à être commandées par des préfets équestres, on peut alors émettre l'hypothèse que celles-ci – ne serait-ce que la deuxième – ont en quelque sorte servi de laboratoires à des changements des modes de combat comparables à ceux observés lors de l'adoption de la cohorte et progressivement étendus au reste des légions. Cependant, Arrien offre précisément l'exemple d'un gouverneur sénatorial capable de prendre la mesure d'un danger survenu aux marges de l'empire et de chercher des solutions pour y faire face. Pourquoi les sénateurs du siècle suivant n'en auraient-ils été plus capables ? D'ailleurs – et c'est un autre acquis des inscriptions d'Apamée – la IIe Légion parthique a parfois été elle aussi commandée par un légat de légion[24]. Dans ce cas, c'est probablement pour des raisons politiques que la légion n'aurait été commandée que par un simple préfet équestre quand elle était cantonnée à Albano à proximité de Rome, tandis qu'elle était peut-être placée sous les ordres d'un légat clarissime quand elle participait à des campagnes militaires lointaines aux côtés d'autres légions[25] : la coordination des opérations était peut-être meilleure quand chaque commandant de légion était du même rang.

Une autre innovation intervenue dans les modes de combat au troisième siècle est connue depuis longtemps car elle est mieux documentée que les éventuelles transformations apparues dans l'infanterie : c'est le rôle croissant joué par la cavalerie. On a attribué à Gallien la création d'une force autonome de cavalerie qui aurait préfiguré celle qui fut placée sous le commandement d'un *magister equitum* à partir du règne de Constantin. Il est vrai que la nécessité de combattre les Germains, les nomades Sarmates ou la cavalerie lourde Sassanide (cataphractaires ou *clibanarii*) conférait une importance nouvelle à cette arme, alors que le premier rôle était jusqu'alors détenu par l'infanterie lourde des légions[26]. Vers 256, Gallien aurait réuni sur le Rhin des vexillations de cavaliers tirés aussi bien des légions, des ailes de cavalerie auxiliaires ou

[24] Balty et Van Rengen 1992, op. cit. (n. 12), nos. 16 et 17.

[25] Balty 1988, op. cit. (n. 10), 101–102 ; Ricci 2000, op. cit. (n. 12), 399 ; Van Rengen 2000, op. cit. (n. 12), 410.

[26] J.-M. Carrié et A. Rousselle, *L'Empire romain en mutation des Sévères à Constantin : 192–337* (Paris 1999), 135–137.

encore des *numeri*, ces supplétifs levés aux confins de l'empire qui combattaient selon leurs traditions propres sans suivre les règles romaines[27]. Sévère Alexandre avait déjà ajouté des archers montés osrhoéniens, palmyréniens et émiséniens aux *numeri* de cavaliers maures et dalmates employés dans l'armée romaine depuis le deuxième siècle. Or, au milieu du troisième siècle, ces soldats étaient encore disponibles, du moins ceux qui avaient survécu, dans la mesure où ils devaient vingt-cinq ans de service. Ce sont donc sans doute eux que Gallien mobilisa car il était impossible d'improviser rapidement une force de cavalerie en raison du temps d'entraînement que nécessitait ce type de formation avant de devenir vraiment efficace. Il y ajouta des Bataves, commandés par un tribun équestre de rang perfectissime, tandis qu'en Orient, un contingent connu sous le nom de *Regii Emeseni Iudaei*, sans doute levé à l'initiative d'Uranius Antoninus, venait s'ajouter aux forces armées opérant dans ce secteur[28]. Une fois constituée, une telle armée ne pouvait en effet être efficace qu'après un long entraînement. Cantonnés à Milan à partir de 259, ces cavaliers servirent de réserve, à la fois contre Postume et contre les Alamans[29]. Il ne faut cependant pas considérer qu'il s'agissait d'une armée distincte et autonome, dans la mesure où les différents détachements qui la constituaient ne semblent jamais avoir été séparés de leur unité d'origine autrement qu'à titre temporaire comme c'était déjà le cas au siècle précédent. La hausse des effectifs des cavaliers légionnaires de 120 à 726 par légion représente en fait la seule innovation qui puisse être datée du troisième siècle en ce qui concerne la cavalerie, mais on débat pour savoir à qui attribuer cette mesure[30].

Même si le commandement de la cavalerie n'a pas connu de véritables transformations institutionnelles au troisième siècle, on peut se demander si l'évolution des techniques militaires n'a pas alors modifié la place qu'il occupait au combat. Dans *Riding for Caesar*, M.P. Speidel a examiné la place occupée par l'empereur et sa garde montée sur le champ de bataille[31]. Ceux-ci se devaient concilier plusieurs impératifs : motiver la troupe, servir à la fois de force de choc et de réserve.

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[27] De Blois 1976, op. cit. (n. 1), 26–30.

[28] C. Zuckerman, « Les "Barbares" romains : au sujet de l'origine des *auxilia* tétrarchiques », dans F. Vallet et M. Kazanski (eds.), *L'armée romaine et les barbares du IIIe au VIIe siècle* (Paris 1993), 17–20.

[29] P. Southern et K.R. Dixon, *The Late Roman Army* (London 1996), 11–12.

[30] Végèce, 2.6 ; Carrié et Rousselle 1999, op. cit. (n. 26), 137 ; Southern et Dixon 1996, op. cit. (n. 29), 12.

[31] M.P. Speidel, *Riding for Caesar. The Roman Emperors' Horse Guard* (London 1994), 120–121.

L'empereur se plaçait donc habituellement au milieu de la deuxième ligne afin que tous puissent se référer à lui, mais en sûreté. Toutefois, il pouvait conduire lui-même une attaque en s'avançant sur la droite de la première ligne à la jonction de l'infanterie et de la cavalerie. Sa présence était matérialisée par un *uexillum* qu'il agitait pour donner le signal de l'offensive. Toutefois, il semble que les empereurs se soient rarement engagés au cœur de la mêlée. Les *equites singulares Augusti* assuraient leur protection, servaient de réserve avec les prétoriens et couvraient la retraite de l'empereur en cas de défaite.

Le même M.P. Speidel, dans sa contribution aux hommages à E. Birley, a récemment tenté de reconstituer l'évolution de l'ordre de bataille de la cavalerie romaine à partir de documents tardifs en insistant sur l'engagement des officiers en première ligne[32]. Or, les études consacrées aux problèmes militaires du troisième siècle s'interrogent peu sur les victimes de ces conflits de plus en plus nombreux. L. de Blois envisageait certes la dimension démographique de la disparition des commandements militaires sénatoriaux mais en insistant surtout sur la faible natalité des familles sénatoriales[33]. Dans *War and Society in imperial Rome 31 B.C.–A.D. 284*, J.B. Campbell a essayé de mesurer les pertes subies par l'armée romaine au combat, mais il ne pose pas la question des morts parmi les cadres[34]. En revanche, ce problème est abordé par O. Stoll qui défend l'hypothèse d'un fort taux de mortalité parmi les officiers romains depuis l'époque républicaine[35]. Dans l'infanterie, il est difficile de savoir si la formation en phalange s'est avérée plus meurtrière que l'ordre manipulaire. En revanche, divers éléments permettent de postuler une mortalité relativement importante des sous-officiers de cavalerie sur le sort desquels M.P. Speidel s'est penché[36]. Il a essayé de déterminer la place respective des décurions, *duplicarii* et *sesquiplicarii* sur le champ de bataille à partir du nombre de montures qui leur était attribué. En effet, les chevaux représentaient des cibles idéales et les cavaliers combattant en première lignes devaient en changer plus souvent que les autres : des écuyers se tenaient donc à l'arrière avec des chevaux de rechange. C'est ainsi qu'ils sont

[32] M.P. Speidel, 'Who Fought in the Front?' dans G. Alföldy, B. Dobson et W. Eck, *Kaiser, Heer und Gesellschaft in der römischen Kaiserzeit. Gedenkschrift für Eric Birley*, (Stuttgart 2000), 473–482.

[33] De Blois 1976, op. cit. (n. 1), 68.

[34] J.B. Campbell, *War and Society in imperial Rome 31 B.C.–A.D. 284* (London and New York 2002), 68–70.

[35] O. Stoll, 'Offizier und Gentleman', *Klio* 80 (1998), 145.

[36] Speidel 2000, op. cit. (n. 32).

parfois représentés sur des stèles funéraires, notamment à Apamée[37]. Si les chevaux représentaient des cibles idéales, on peut envisager que ceux qui les montaient se trouvaient eux aussi très exposés quand ils montaient en première ligne. Quant aux officiers de rang équestre, outre le cas d'Aulus Atticus cité par Tacite dans la *Vie d'Agricola*[38], on en connaît au moins un mort au combat en Afrique en 260[39]. Or, les provinces africaines étaient loin d'être les plus exposées au troisième siècle. M.P. Speidel émet l'hypothèse que le recrutement croissant de cavaliers d'origine germanique dans l'armée romaine à partir du milieu du troisième siècle a pu renforcer cet engagement des officiers et sous-officiers de cavalerie en première ligne, déjà attesté au siècle précédent par l'inscription retraçant la carrière de Marcus Valerius Maximianus qui avait tué de sa main en Germanie Valaon, le chef des Naristes[40]. Le développement de la cavalerie a donc exigé des officiers compétents dans ce domaine de plus en plus nombreux, notamment pour combler les pertes militaires au combat.

Il est vrai que ces sources demeurent assez minces, mais on peut y ajouter un dernier argument. À Trajan Dèce tué sur le champ de bataille d'Abrittus en 251 et à Valérien capturé par les Perses à Édesse en 260, on ajoute désormais Gordien III. En effet, la découverte en 1936 à Naqs-i Rustem près de Persépolis d'une inscription trilingue (parthe, perse et grec) gravée en 270 à la gloire de Sapor et connue depuis les recherches de M.I. Rostovtseff sous le nom de *Res Gestae Diui Saporis* est venue démentir l'*Histoire Auguste* qui prétendait que le jeune empereur avait été victime d'une mutinerie fomentée par ses nouveaux préfets du prétoire. Le témoignage de cette inscription, d'ailleurs confirmée par celui des bas-reliefs perses de Darab et de Bichapour[41], suggère que Gordien III mourut plutôt des blessures occasionnées par une chute de cheval pendant la bataille de Mnésichè, remportée par Sapor au début de mars 244. À une époque qui a vu, périr deux empereurs sur le front et un troisième capturé, en une quinzaine d'années, ne peut-on supposer que les officiers sénatoriaux, qui n'étaient pas plus de soixante ou

[37] Balty et Rengen 1992, op. cit. (n. 12), nos. 21 et 24.
[38] Tacitus, *Vie d'Agricola* 37.9.
[39] *CIL* 8.9047 (= *ILS* 2767).
[40] *AE* 1956 no. 124.
[41] M.I. Rostovtseff, '*Res Gestae Diui Saporis* and Dura', *Berytus* 8 (1943), 17–60; B.C. MacDermot, 'Roman Emperors in the Sassanid Reliefs', *Journal of Roman Studies* 44 (1954), 76–80 et A. Maricq, '*Res Gestae Diui Saporis*', *Syria* 35 (1958), 295–360.

soixante-dix[42], ont eux aussi payé un tribut assez lourd qui ne leur aurait plus permis de pourvoir tous les postes vacants. Rappelons d'ailleurs que les chevaliers placés à la tête des provinces ou des légions pouvaient être qualifiés d'*agens uice praesidis*, c'est à dire qu'ils étaient censés assurer l'interim du gouverneur, comme si le changement de statut était conçu comme transitoire. Quant aux préfets de légion, également choisis dans l'ordre équestre, ils étaient qualifiés d'*agens uice legati*, ce qui signifiait qu'ils remplaçaient le légat dans les provinces impériales consulaires[43]. Ces titres ne pouvaient-il pas correspondre parfois aux décès de certains gouverneurs ou officiers sénatoriaux ?

Formations de combat plus compactes, développement de la cavalerie, il s'agit là d'évolutions sur le long terme. Mais on peut également s'interroger sur le rôle joué par les circonstances du début des années 260 dans la promotion des chevaliers issus des rangs de l'armée. Il faut en effet prendre en compte les provinces et les garnisons perdues par Gallien en raison des invasions et des sécessions. L'offensive de Sapor en juin 260, suivie par l'usurpation de Macrien et de Ballista faisait échapper les provinces syriennes, anatoliennes et l'Égypte à l'autorité de l'empereur dès l'été, tandis qu'en Occident Postume s'imposait dans les Gaules, les Bretagnes, les Germanies et la Rhétie et Régalien en Pannonie supérieure mais pour un temps très limité. Certes, dès le second semestre de cette même année 260, la Pannonie supérieure et les provinces orientales rentraient dans l'obédience de Gallien, ces dernières sous l'impulsion du prince Odenath de Palmyre qui reconnaissait encore l'autorité de l'empereur de Rome[44]. Il n'empêche que toutes les provinces européennes occidentales (de la Rhétie à la Bretagne) continuèrent à lui échapper jusqu'au règne d'Aurélien. Or, celles-ci représentaient un vivier de plus en plus important pour le recrutement d'officiers équestre comme l'ont démontré les recherches prosopographiques d'H. Devijver. Pour le troisième siècle, celui-ci en a ainsi recensé six pour les provinces de Narbonnaise, Lyonnaise, Germanie inférieure,

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[42] B. Dobson, 'The Roman Army: Wartime or Peacetime Army', dans W. Eck et H. Wolff (eds.), *Heer und Integrationspolitik: Die römischen Militärdiplome als historische Quelle*, (Köln 1986), 10–25 à 21 [Réimprimé dans D.J. Breeze et B. Dobson (eds.), *Roman Officers and Frontiers*, Mavors 10 (Stuttgart 1993), 124].

[43] B. Malcus, 'Notes sur la révolution du système administratif romain au IIIe siècle', *Opuscula Romana* 7 (1969), 213–237 ; Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 44–60 et A. Chastagnol, *Le Sénat romain* (Paris 1992), 209–210.

[44] M. Christol, *L'Empire romain du IIIe siècle. Histoire politique : 192–325 après J.-C.* (Paris 1997), 139–148.

Bretagne, Rhétie et Norique, contre huit pour celles de Dalmatie, Pannonie supérieure et inférieure, Mésie supérieure et inférieure et Dacie (cinq en Tarraconnaise et vingt-sept dans les provinces africaines). Même si on ne connaît qu'une infime proportion de ces officiers, on observe que l'on en connaissait sept contre neuf dans chacun de ces deux ensembles de provinces pour la période Marc Aurèle-Caracalla, mais vingt-six contre six pour la période Trajan-Antonin le Pieux[45]. Alors que les Germanies avaient fourni de nombreux tribuns aux *equites singulares Augusti* tout au long du deuxième siècle[46], la perte de contrôle de ces provinces a pu favoriser la promotion des Illyriens entre les règnes de Gallien et d'Aurélien, en renforçant une tendance amorcée depuis l'époque sévérienne. M.P. Speidel relève d'ailleurs une évolution similaire en ce qui concerne le recrutement des *equites singulares Augusti* (dont Maximin le Thrace aurait fait peut-être partie) et de leurs tribuns assez bien documenté par leurs stèles funéraires. Ces régions étaient en effet aussi réputées pour leur savoir-faire et leurs traditions équestres[47]. Mais alors que les guerres de Marc Aurèle avaient facilité l'admission dans le sénat de nombreux officiers équestres, cette fois les empereurs ont préféré priver les sénateurs de commandement militaire. Pourquoi ne pas avoir continué à faire entrer ces officiers au sénat avant de leur confier des commandements légionnaires et des gouvernements de province ? Ne serait-ce pas également parce que les sénateurs n'étaient pas prêts à accepter ces nouveaux venus dont l'ascension sociale avait été souvent extrêmement rapide et qui manquaient encore trop d'*humanitas*[48], comme en témoigne le mépris de l'historiographie d'inspiration sénatoriale envers Maximin le Thrace ? On constate en effet que c'est plus tard dans le déroulement de leur carrière que l'on voit certains d'entre eux obtenir les ornements consulaires, voire l'accès à la curie.

Pour conclure, il faut peut-être relativiser l'ampleur d'un éventuel édit de Gallien sur les commandements militaires. Plus que les raisons

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[45] Devijver 1989, op. cit. (n. 4), 112–116 et C. Ricci, « Il sarcofago anonimo di un ufficiale anonimo e il tribunato di legione prima o dopo la riforma di Gallieno », dans Le Bohec et Wolff 2004, op. cit. (n. 14), 437–449.

[46] Speidel 1994, op. cit. (n. 31), 98–102.

[47] *Ibidem*, 81–86.

[48] M. Christol, « Armée et société politique dans l'Empire romain au IIIe siècle ap. J.-C. (de l'époque sévérienne au début de l'époque constantinienne) », *Civiltà classica e cristiana* 9 (1988), 190–203 ; Chastagnol 1992, op. cit. (n. 43), 219–223 ; J. Wilkes, « Les provinces balkaniques », dans Cl. Lepelley (ed.), *Rome et l'intégration de l'Empire : 44 av. J.-C.–260 ap. J.-C. Tome 2 : Approches régionales du Haut-Empire romain* (Paris 1998), 284–287.

strictement politiques, il faut redonner toutes leurs places aux circonstances pour expliquer la disparition des commandements sénatoriaux, et notamment aux pertes militaires. Quant à la question des compétences militaires, c'est peut-être en raison du développement de la cavalerie que l'on commença à faire appel à des commandants de rang inférieur au clarissimat. Entre le deuxième et le quatrième siècle, la proportion entre unités de cavalerie et d'infanterie serait passé de 1/10 à 1/3[49]. Outre le taux de pertes plus élevés, les sénateurs maîtrisaient sans doute moins ce type de combat que les habitants des provinces danubiennes et balkaniques. On comprend donc que 262 ait aussi été l'année où des émissions monétaires honorèrent pour la première fois des cavaliers en raison du rôle décisif qu'ils avaient joué sur les champs de bataille des années 253–261[50]. Un peu plus tard, une inscription de Grenoble souligne également le rôle joué par les *equites* dans l'offensive de Julius Placidianus en Narbonnaise[51]. D'ailleurs, le besoin croissant de bons officiers de cavalerie s'est sans doute fait sentir suffisamment tôt pour que la décision d'augmenter les effectifs de la cavalerie légionnaire pût être prise par Gallien, comme le suggérait déjà L. de Blois en 1976. Les meilleurs cavaliers légionnaires avaient eux-aussi vocation en accédant à l'ordre équestre à pourvoir en officiers une armée dont les cadres tombaient en plus grand nombre sur les champs de bataille. De même que l'état de guerre devenu presque permanent dans certains secteurs avait d'ailleurs conduit à redonner à la notion de province le sens qui était le sien à l'époque républicaine (celui d'une mission à accomplir dans une région ne correspondant pas forcément à un ressort administratif particulier), de même, le titre de chevalier romain aurait alors retrouvé sa signification première : celui de combattant à cheval.

Paris, octobre 2006

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[49] J.E.H. Spaul, *Ala2, The Auxiliary Cavalry Units of the Pre-Diocletianic Imperial Army* (Andover 1994), 265–267.

[50] L. Okamura, 'The flying columns of Emperor Gallienus : "legionary" coins and their hoards', dans V. Maxfield et M.J. Dobson (eds.), *Roman Frontier Studies 1989 : Proceedings of the XV International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies* (Exeter 1991), 387–391 et Carrié et Rousselle 1999, op. cit. (n. 26), 136.

[51] *CIL* 12.2228 (= *ILS* 569).

THE CAESONII IN THE THIRD CENTURY A.D.: THE IMPACT OF CRISES ON SENATORIAL STATUS AND POWER

INGE MENNEN*

Introduction

It is undeniable that the third century was a period full of critical situations. From the death of Commodus in 192 until the radical reforms of Diocletian beyond 284 A.D., the Roman Empire had to cope with civil wars, military rebellions and mutiny, pestilence and a growing number of barbarian invasions at the frontiers. Especially in the period 249–284, Roman emperors had to concentrate on warfare more than ever before, in more parts of the Empire, and with growing intensity. By spending much time in border regions and other war-zones, they built up personal networks that were different from those of earlier emperors. They encountered more military men and imperial staff acting in the provinces and fewer high status senators and knights. In this way, these upstart military and technocratic men obtained access to crucial assignments and functions created to solve crises in important areas and had the chance to reach an extremely powerful position within the Empire.

However, even within this period of change, continuity did not vanish completely. As this article will show, there were several elite Roman families which were able to maintain or even develop their position within the chaos and transformations of the third century. The Caesonii will be used as an example to illustrate the position of such a central elite family throughout the third century. To this end, the careers of several generations of this family will be discussed in detail first. Next, the role of the Caesonii and other central elite families in the administration of the third century will be dealt with. This will lead

* This paper stems from a poster presented at the 7th workshop of the international network 'Impact of Empire', 20–24 June 2006 in Nijmegen. It serves as an illustrative example of a wider topic, i.e. administration, appointment policies and social hierarchies in the Roman Empire, A.D. 193–284, which I will treat in my PhD study. An earlier draft of this paper was read by Luuk de Blois, Daniëlle Slootjes and Heather van Tress, who all have made valuable suggestions, and to whom I express my thanks.

to some remarks concerning imperial appointment policy towards the traditional senatorial elite in the third century and the impact of crises on their status and power.

The Caesonii – the course of the third century reflected in three careers

The careers of three generations of the family of the Caesonii coincide with Roman imperial history stretching from the reign of Marcus Aurelius to the reign of Diocletian.[1] Gaius Caesonius Macer Rufinianus, born around 155/160 A.D., was the first member of this family who reached a consulship.[2] It is generally assumed that he had Italic roots.[3] Beside the fact that his father was also called Gaius, nothing is known about his ancestors. Dietz claimed that this Caesonius must have been a *homo novus* based on the fact that he started his career as a *triumvir capitalis*. However, Eck rightly argues that this argument cannot be considered decisive.[4] Caesonius Macer Rufinianus married Manilia Lucilla and it has been suggested that she was the sister or daughter of (Tiberius) Manilius Fuscus, *consul suffectus* 196/197, *consul II ordinarius* 225.[5] Caesonius' career can be deduced from an inscription on an epitaph set up by his son. This inscription found near Tibur mentions his entire career in inversed order.[6]

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[1] According to *DNP*, Bd. 2 (1997), 929, Caesonius was a Roman family name, documented from the first century B.C.

[2] *PIR*² C 210. On this man and his career see also: W. Eck, *Die Statthalter der germanischen Provinzen vom 1.-3. Jahrhundert* (Köln 1985), 76–77; M. Christol, *Essai sur l'évolution des carrières sénatoriales dans la 2e moitié du IIIe s. ap. J.-C.* (Paris 1986), 160–162; P.M.M. Leunissen, *Konsuln und Konsulare in der Zeit von Commodus bis Severus Alexander (180–235 n. Chr.)* (Amsterdam 1989), 388; B.E. Thomasson, *Fasti Africani: senatorische und ritterlichen Amtsträger in dem römischen Provinzen Nordafrikas von Augustus bis Diokletian* (Stockholm 1996), 86–87 no. 118; C. Badel and A. Bérenger, *L'empire romain au IIIe siècle après J.-C.* (Paris 1998), 139–141.

[3] Eck and Leunissen suggest that he is from Regio I, possibly from Antium. See Eck 1985, op. cit. (n. 2), 76; Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 357.

[4] K. Dietz, *Senatus contra Principem. Untersuchungen zur senatorischen Oppostion gegen Kaiser Maximinus Thrax* (München 1980), 104 f.; Eck 1985, op. cit. (n. 2.), 76.

[5] L. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus, the son of Caesonius and Manilia Lucilla, was one of the *Fratres Arvales*, which was a heritable priestly office. That is why Settipani suggests that Lucilla might have been connected to Ti. Manilius Fuscus (*PIR*² M 137), who was *Frater Arvalis* in 190. C. Settipani, *Continuité gentilice et continuité familiale dans les familles sénatoriales romaines à l'époque impériale: mythe et réalité* (Oxford 2000), 349, note 4.

[6] *CIL* 14.3900 = *ILS* 1182 = *Inscr. It.* IV 1, 102 (Latium, Tibur). For an overview of his career and the careers of the other Caesonii, see the Appendix.

The start of his senatorial career was not exceptional. Being one of the *vigintiviri*, he fulfilled a police-function in Rome as *triumvir capitalis*. This appointment cannot be dated exactly, but was probably at the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, just before taking his position as military *tribunus*, one of the commanders of *legio I Adiutrix*. For this position he left Italy to go to Brigetio in Pannonia Superior, probably during Marcus' second expedition in Germania.[7] He was about twenty years old at that time. It was in the period in which he held this function that his unit was granted military honours (*dona militaria*) by the emperor, which is proudly mentioned in the inscription as well. The next step in his *cursus honorum* was a position as *quaestor* in Narbonensis after which he returned to Rome to become *tribunus plebis*, probably already during the reign of Commodus. Around 185, he was sent to Hispania Baetica as *legatus* to assist the governor and about two years later he became *praetor* and entered the next stage of his career.

Before reaching the consulship, his praetorian career included six or seven positions and can, therefore, be considered rather long. He assisted the governor of Asia as *legatus* and subsequently fulfilled the first of several positions as Italic *curator* in his career. As *curator rei publicae* he probably executed a financial task in Asculum (Picenum), followed by another military function as *legatus* of *legio VII Claudia* at Viminacium in Moesia Superior. Next, he became *proconsul* of Achaia. Governing Greece was reserved for junior praetorian senators. After his proconsulship he returned to Italy to become *curator rei publicae* of Tarracina, a city in Latium, at the end of the reign of Commodus or not long after this emperor's death in 192.[8] He went to Spain for his next position as *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, governing Lusitania. It is not certain whether he was already appointed when Septimius Severus was proclaimed emperor, or whether the new emperor appointed him there, but he probably retained his position until his function as *consul suffectus* in circa 197/198, when he was about forty years old. The consulship might have been a reward for taking part in putting down the rebellion of Lucius Novius Rufus, governor of Hispania Citerior and

[7] G. Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses. Senatorische Reichsbeamte und Offiziere in den Spanischen Provinzen des römischen Reiches von Augustus bis Diokletian* (Wiesbaden 1969), 146–147; R. Syme, *Emperors and Biography* (Oxford 1971), 159. Pflaum suggested that this office was fulfilled in 173; H.-G. Pflaum, *Les fastes de la province de Narbonnaise* (Paris 1978), 84–85.

[8] Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 388, suggests circa 193. For a date at the end of the reign of Commodus, see W. Eck, *L'Italia nell'impero Romano. Stato e amministrazione in epoca imperiale* (Bari 1999), 236.

supporter of Clodius Albinus, one of the rivals of Septimius Severus.[9] This certainly would explain the further course of his career.

Just before, or not long after, his consulship, he was appointed to his third position as Italic *curator rei publicae*, this time in Teanum, a city in the northern part of Campania.[10] Around 198 he became responsible for the banks and channels of the Tiber as *curator alvei Tiberis*, a position which both his son as his grandson would also occupy in the future. After this, probably around 200, he was appointed to his first consular governorship in Germania Superior. For his next post of *curator aquarum et Miniciae* he returned to Italy. Presumably he fulfilled this position somewhere between 203 and 213, but the exact date and duration are unclear.[11] Caesonius' next position crowned his career: he was appointed *proconsul* to govern the economically important province of Africa. He may have fulfilled this position under Caracalla in 213/214 or 214/215, but a date under Elagabal or Severus Alexander has also been suggested.[12] Caesonius Macer Rufinianus' task as *curator rei publicae* of Lavinium or Lanuvium, both of which are in Latium, brought him back to Italy once more. He fulfilled it twice, at the end of the reign of Caracalla, according to Eck.[13] He was also *sodalis Augustalis*, but it is impossible to determine the exact position of this priestly office within his career.

His career ended in a remarkable way: Caesonius Macer Rufinianus was *comes* of emperor Severus Alexander, most probably during the latter's Persian campaign of 231–233 A.D. It seems unthinkable that the senator, who must have been over 70 years old during the Persian

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[9] Alföldy 1969, op. cit. (n. 7), 146; Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 161; Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 155 and 289.

[10] Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 161 agrees with *PIR*² C 210 that this position must have been fulfilled before the consulship and that the post of *curator alvei Tiberis* must have been Caesonius' first consular task. Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 388, suggests that the curatorship of Teanum was his first consular position.

[11] Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 161, note 9, follows Pflaum 1989, op. cit. (n. 7), 85, who suggests 204 or not much later. Here Pflaum rectifies the date of about 220, previously suggested by him. See H.-G. Pflaum, 'Du nouveau sur les Agri Decumates à la lumière d'un fragment de Capoue', *Bonner Jahrbücher*, 163 (1963), 234–237.

[12] Thomasson 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), pp. 86–87, suggests a date under Elagabal or Severus Alexander and that, in this case, his son might have served as his father's *legatus* in Africa. He claims that there is not much space for a proconsulship during the reign of Caracalla. Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2) 162, and Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 388, suggest a date between 212/213 and 215.

[13] Eck 1985, op. cit. (n. 2), 76, accepts Lavinium; Eck 1999, op. cit. (n. 8), 234, says Lanuvium.

expedition of this emperor, was actually taken along on this perilous and exhausting Eastern campaign. Suggestions that the title *comes* had developed into a title to indicate that someone was connected to the court, like *amicus*, might therefore very well be true.[14]

The son of Caesonius Macer Rufinianus and his wife Manilia Lucilla was named Lucius Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus and was probably born around 195.[15] His career is known to us mainly from an inscription on a statue base also found near Tibur.[16]

He started his career as one of the *vigintiviri* with a judicial position as *decemvir stlitibus iudicandis* sometime at the beginning of the reign of Caracalla. At that time, or not long afterwards, the family was accepted into the patriciate (*electus in familiam patriciam*). This can be noticed in the career of Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus: he was appointed *quaestor* as imperial *candidatus* at the end of Caracalla's reign and became *praetor candidatus* after that, without intervening positions, which was typical for a patrician career. His appointment as *praetor* was probably after the death of Caracalla, during the reign of Elagabal, around 220/222.[17]

Like his father, Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus also served in several positions as *curator*, two of which followed immediately after his praetorship. First, he became *curator rei publicae* of Suessa, a city in Campania. For the second curatorship both Tusculum in Latium as well as Puteoli in Campania near Naples are suggested.[18] Either way, both positions were fulfilled in Italic cities. A post as *legatus* and at the same time deputy of the *proconsul* brought him to Africa, where he would return later in his career, and consecutively led to his suffect consulship. These positions can be dated around 225/230, during the

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[14] Pflaum 1978, op. cit. (n. 7), 85–86; see also Thomasson 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), 87.

[15] Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 162, note 15.

[16] *CIL* 14.3902 = *ILS* 1186 = *Inscr. It.* IV I, 104 (Latium et Campania, Tibur). See also: *CIL* 6.2104b; *CIL* 6.37165; AE 1915, no. 102 = *CIL* 6.39443. For this Caesonius, see *PIR*² C 209 and Dietz 1980, op. cit. (n. 4), no. 17, 103 ff.; Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 158–172; Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 377; Thomasson 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), no. 122, 90; M. Peachin, *Iudex vice Caesaris. Deputy Emperors and the Administration of Justice during the Principate* (Stuttgart 1996), 112–114.

[17] Peachin 1996, op. cit. (n. 16), 113, dates the first steps of his career somewhat earlier. He assumes that this Caesonius was *quaestor* in circa 212 and *praetor* in circa 217. In that case, both positions would have been carried out during the reign of Caracalla.

[18] About the problem, see *PIR*² C 209 and also Thomasson 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), 90.

reign of Severus Alexander, at about the same time that Caesonius' father was *comes* of this emperor.

Shortly after his consulship, the function of *curator alvei Tiberis et cloacarum urbis* became his first consular task. His next job as *curator aquarum et Miniciae*, the position which his father had also fulfilled, can be dated during the last years of Severus Alexander's reign, between 230 and 235. In the year 238 he was chosen as one of the *vigintiviri ex senatus consulto rei publicae curandae*, who, by senatorial decree, were to set the empire free from the among senators very unpopular emperor Maximinus Thrax. His membership of this group shows that he was a highly respected member of the senate. Eventually, the group of twenty succeeded. All the known members of the *vigintiviri* of 238 had successful careers. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus was awarded with a *proconsulship* of Africa and returned to this province with which he was already familiar. It must have been about ten to fifteen years after his position as *legatus* and *vice proconsulis*, probably not before 240/241, since it is attested that he took part in meetings of the *fratres Arvales* in 239 and even in January 240.[19] Both the *Historia Augusta* and Zosimus mention the usurpation of a Sabinianus who was acclaimed emperor in Carthage in 240 and was struck down at the end of the year by the governor of Mauretania Caesariensis.[20] Caesonius might have been sent there to restore order in the province, which would mean that emperor Gordianus III put great trust in this man. However, this is merely an assumption.

That Caesonius concluded his career with a position as *praefectus urbi* and a judicial task as deputy of the emperor himself (*electus ad cognoscendas vice Caesaris cognitiones*), also implies that he enjoyed imperial trust. Unfortunately, these last two positions cannot be dated more precisely than with a *terminus ante quem* of 254. So, although it is likely that they were also fulfilled during the reign of Gordianus III, as *PIR* suggests, they could also have been carried out under Philippus Arabs, Decius, Trebonianus Gallus, Aemilius Aemilianus or even Valerianus. It is also unclear whether the two positions were carried out simultaneously or subsequently.[21] A second consulship might have been expected, but

[19] *CIL* 6.37165; Thomasson 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), 90, note 137.

[20] *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Vita Gordiani* 23, 4; Zosimus 1.17.1.

[21] Peachin 1996, op. cit. (n. 16), 114, deals with the problem of dating these positions. He locates Caesonius as *vice Caesaris* in Rome between 242 and 244, when Gordianus III was conducting his *expedition Orientalis*, and thinks this position was prior to the

Caesonius may have died before he could have been appointed. At any rate, Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus proved to be one of the more important senators during the first half of the third century, considered loyal by several emperors.

The next generation of the Caesonii was represented by Lucius Caesonius Ovinius Manlius Rufinianus Bassus.[22] He was the son of the above-mentioned Caesonius and a woman who probably descended from the *gens Ovinia*, which was important in the third century as well.[23] His career can be deduced from an honorary inscription from Aversa.[24]

He must have been born during the reign of Severus Alexander, between 225 and 230, and served in his first position about 240/245 under Gordianus III or Philippus Arabs. Just like his grandfather he started his career as *triumvir capitalis*. Next, he became *sevir turmae deducendae (equitum Romanorum)*, one of six men responsible for organising the annual games, which brought along a great financial responsibility. As a patrician, the next steps in his career were *quaestor candidatus* and *praetor candidatus*.

His praetorian career was short. Two functions as *curator rei publicae* led him directly to the consulship. His first curatorship was carried out in Beneventum in the southern part of Italy and the second one in Lavinium in Latium led him to a city where his grandfather may also

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prefecture of the city. He suggests that Caesonius laid down his position as judge when Philip returned to Rome and that he was then named *praefectus urbi*, circa 246. However, he admits that the epigraphic evidence supplies no precision in this regard.

[22] *PIR*² C 212; *PIR*² O 186; *PLRE* I, 1971, s.v. Bassus 18. See also Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 158–176; Thomasson 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), no. 130, 93–94.

[23] According to Settipani 2000, op. cit. (n. 5), 351, this Caesonius was married to an (Ovinia), who was probably the sister of (L. Ovinius) Pacatianus, who was married with Cornelia Optata A[quilia?] Flavia…, the sister of Cn. Cornelius Paternus, *consul ordinarius* 233. He suggests that L. Ovinius Rusticus Cornelianus, *consul suffectus* in the middle of the third century, and Ovinius Pacatianus, *praefectus urbi* 276, might have been their children, and that an Ovinius Iulius Aquilus (?) Nonius Paternus, *consul ordinarius* 267?, *consul II ordinarius* 279, *praefectus urbi* 281, might have been their grandson. However, he admits that there are too many uncertainties about the Ovinii to determine a *stemma*.

[24] *AE* 1964, no. 223 (Aversa, Campania). He is also known from three other inscriptions (*CIL* 10.1687 = *ILS* 1206; *AE* 1945, no. 21; *AE* 1968, no. 109), which add little to our knowledge of his career. According to Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 167–176, they refer to the homonymic son of the *consul suffectus* ca 260. This theory, however, was not adopted by many scholars. See Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 202, note 318, and Thomasson 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), 93, note 137. Even if Christol's assumption would be correct, this would only point at another successful generation of the Caesonii within the third century, and would support my argument.

have served as curator. He fulfilled his consulship around 260, probably as *consul suffectus*.[25] At that point his career had survived the many changes of imperial power during the 250's.

His consular career started with the position of *curator alvei Tiberis et cloacarum sacrae urbis*, also fulfilled by both his father and grandfather. He held several positions in Africa, a province he may have known from accompanying his father during his proconsulship. However, this might have interfered with the start of his own *cursus honorum*. This Caesonius was *legatus* of Carthage, *curator* of the *colonia Carthaginensium* and finally *proconsul Africae* for three years in a row. The three African positions are mentioned in succession on his career inscription, but it is doubtful whether they were actually fulfilled consecutively. It has been suggested by both Eck and Christol that the positions of *legatus* and *curator* belonged to the praetorian part of his career.[26] The functions might have been clustered in the inscription because they were all fulfilled in the same area. The proconsulship of Africa, which can be dated around 275 under Aurelianus and/or Tacitus, did not mean the end of this man's career. On the contrary, the emperor Probus chose him to chair the *iudicium magnum*, probably a court of appeal at Rome. After this, he carried out some other judicial functions under Probus. He was appointed judge (*iudex*) as deputy of the emperor himself (*vice Caesaris*) in cases between the imperial treasury (*fiscus*), and private individuals and cases between private persons themselves.[27] At first, he fulfilled this position in Rome, probably between 276 and 281, and later, presumably during the last years of the reign of Probus (281/282), also in Africa. The title *comes Augustorum duorum* was probably bestowed upon him between 283 and 285, when Carus and Carinus or Carinus and Numerianus were joint emperors.

Two more positions are mentioned in the inscriptions: a second consulship and a position as prefect of the city of Rome. The consulship can be dated around 284 and was presumably a suffect one, which was quite unique. After 104 A.D., all the *consules iterum* had been *ordinarii*.[28] However, most of the positions of *consules ordinarii* in the years 283 to

[25] It has been suggested that he was identical with the Bassus, who was *consul ordinarius* in 259. See Christol 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 100–101.

[26] Eck, *RE* Suppl. 14 (1974), 82; Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 163–164.

[27] It is unclear whether this position was first exercised *inter fiscum et privatos* and later only *(item) inter privatos*, or whether the categories did not change. See Christol 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 166.

[28] See Eck 1974, op. cit. (n. 26), 82.

285 were fulfilled by the emperors themselves, so there was hardly any space for non-imperial *consules ordinarii* in those years, which might explain this uncommon situation. The consulship might have coincided with the position of *praefectus urbi*. It is striking that this Caesonius is not mentioned in the list of city prefects of the Chronographer of 354. Usually, this is explained by suggesting that Caesonius was not *praefectus* of Rome at the first of January, but was appointed in the middle of a year to replace someone else.[29] The exact year in which he performed this function is uncertain, but it was probably around 285, during or just before the start of the reign of Diocletian. According to the inscription, Caesonius was also *salius Palatinus, pontifex maior* and *pontifex dei Solis*. Only the last priestly office can be dated, although not precisely, since this office only came into use under Aurelianus in 274.

Inscription *AE* 1968, 109 mentions one other function: *pr[…]ones tracto Piceno*. Unfortunately, this function cannot be determined with certainty. Suggested solutions are *praefectus adversus latrines* (against brigands), *praefectus annones* (responsible for the corn crop) and *praefectus ad tirones* (to select recruits).[30] Beside the fact that the function cannot be determined, it is also problematic that the position within the career cannot be established, since in this inscription the functions seem not to be in chronological sequence.

A Caesonius Bassus was *consul ordinarius* in 317. He was probably the son or rather the grandson of Caesonius Ovinius Manlius Rufinianus Bassus and was the last consul of the Caesonii who is known to us.[31]

The Caesonii and other central elite families in the third century

Within about a century the Caesonii seemed to have developed from a rather ordinary senatorial, perhaps originally even equestrian, family into a patrician clan whose members had flourishing careers under many emperors of the third century. The family does not seem to have suffered from the numerous changes of imperial power which appeared especially from 238 A.D. onward. Quite the contrary. The

[29] See under *PIR*² O 186.

[30] See Eck 1974, op. cit. (n. 26), 83. Eck prefers Barbieri's suggested solution of *pr[aefectus ad tir]ones*.

[31] *PLRE* I, Bassus 12.

most impressive appointments within the careers of the Caesonii can be dated after that critical year.

Many similarities can be found in the careers of the three Caesonii. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus and his son fulfilled both their quaestorship and their praetorship as *candidati* of the emperor. This demonstrates imperial favour as well as their patrician status. Typical of a patrician career is also the relatively low number of offices between the praetorship and the consulship within their careers.

The number of positions, mainly curatorships, in which the Caesonii served in Italy is considerable. The position of *curator aquarum*, the prefecture of Rome, and possibly also the curatorship of Lavinium, were fulfilled by two of them. The post of *curator alvei Tiberis* even appears in all of their careers.

Besides Italy, Africa was a region in which all of them were active. All three of them reached the high post of *proconsul* of Africa. In this way the emperors took a certain risk by enabling the family to build up a social network in Africa. The risk of usurpation grew when a family had connections in a certain area and could lead to situations comparable to the seizure of power by the Gordiani in the years 238 to 244. Apparently, the advantage of the fact that they knew the province was considered more important than taking precautionary measures against usurpation.

In any case, the confidence put in the Caesonii was not misplaced: none of the members of this family abused their power. On the other hand, after 238, military commanders, not senators, appeared to be the greatest threat to the imperial throne. Military experience, military power and social networks among military officers were matters that made a difference from 240 onward. Those were exactly the qualities that the Caesonii largely lacked. The positions they fulfilled mainly offered them experience in the financial and legal sphere, hardly any knowledge of the military, and most of them involved more honour than actual power.

Two events were decisive for the position of the Caesonii in the period between the reign of Marcus Aurelius and the reign of Diocletian. First, the fact that Caesonius Macer Rufinianus chose to support Septimius Severus in his battle against Clodius Albinus, and second, the fact that Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus became one of the *vigintiviri* in 238. The first decision brought the family consular and patrician status and put them on the map as an important senatorial family. The second matter enabled them to maintain their position in

a chaotic period and to rise to the highest possible positions within a senatorial career and some intriguing special tasks in direct service to the emperors. During the remainder of this period of about a hundred years, the Caesonii seem to have kept a low profile, being loyal to most emperors, but never so bound to one emperor in particular that his death would cause danger to them. In this way, they were able to survive the chaos and transformations of the third century crises.

To what extent is the case of the Caesonii applicable to the situation of other central elite families in the third century? Unfortunately, the family of the Caesonii is the only family of which the careers of several generations in a row have come down to us. However, enough is known about some other families and the careers of some members of these families to compare their situation with that of the Caesonii.

Some of these families can be traced back to the time of the Republic, like the Acilii Glabriones et Aviolae and the Valerii Messalae. Others seem to have obtained consular status during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, for example the Brutii, the Vettii and even the Claudii Pompeiani, descendants of Tiberius Claudius Pompeianus, important general and son-in-law of Marcus Aurelius. A third group arose during the reign of Septimius Severus. Some examples are the Virii and the Marii, who were descendants of men who supported Septimius Severus during the civil wars, just like Caesonius Macer Rufinianus.

Uniting families through nuptial bonds, as happened between the Caesonii and the Ovinii, was a rather common way for these families to maintain or expand their position. That this could have far-reaching results is demonstrated by the example of the Hedii Lolliani and the Egnatii. The sister of the Hedii Lolliani, who where *consules ordinarii* in 209 and 211, got married to one of the Egnatii, Egnatius Victor, *consul suffectus* before 207.[32] Their daughter, (Egnatia) Mariniana got married to the future emperor Publius Licinius Valerianus, and gave birth to the future emperor Publius Licinius Egnatius Gallienus.

A considerably number of these central elite families seems to have originated from Italic areas.[33] Some of them had patrician status and

[32] Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus was *consul ordinarius* in 209 and (Hedius) Terentius Gentianus in 211.

[33] This goes for example with certainty for the Acilii, the Brutii (Volcei, Luciana), the Numii, the Ragonii (Opitergium, Venetia et Histria) and probably also for the Egnatii (Etruscan origine), the Hedii Lolliani (Liguria), the Valerii Messallae and the Virii (northern Italy).

if so, a position as *quaestor* and/or *praetor candidatus* often shows up in careers of members of this family.[34] A large number of Italic curatorships also appears within the careers of members of these families.[35]

Many of these central elite family members appear on the list of *praefecti urbi*: L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus (218–219); L. Egnatius Victor Lollianus (in 254, under his brother-in-law Valerianus); Valerius Maximus (probably in 255); L. Virius Orfitus (273–274) and Vir(i)us Lupus (278–280). The post of *proconsul Africae* or *Asiae* was also often given to members of these families. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus served as *proconsul Africae* and *Asiae* during the reign of Caracalla.[36] Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus was *proconsul Asiae* about 224. L. Egnatius Victor Lollianus even held the position of *proconsul Asiae* for three succeeding years in the period 242–247. He might have been sent there by Gordianus III in connection with the campaign against the Persians and was probably allowed to keep this position under Philippus Arabs. Apparently, he made the right decision by immediately supporting Philippus as the new emperor who, in return, did not replace him.[37] Finally, several judicial positions, sometimes as deputy of the emperor, were carried out by members of these elite families. For example Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus who was *iuridicus* in Spain, in Asturia and Callaecia, during the reign of Septimius Severus, and Vir(i)us Lupus who was appointed *iudex sacrarum cognitionum vice Caesaris* in Egypt (or Asia) and the East by emperor Aurelianus or Probus.

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[34] C. Vettius Gratus Sabinianus, for example, was *praetor candidatus*, and L. Marius Perpetuus was *quaestor candidatus*. C. Vettius Gratus Atticus Sabinianus was both *quaestor* as well as *praetor candidatus*, just like Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus.

[35] Some examples: both C. Vettius Gratus Sabinianus and his presumed brother C. Vettius Gratus Atticus Sabinianus served as *curator Flaminiae et alimentorum*. L. Valerius Claud(ius) Acilius Priscil(l)ianus [Maximus], also one of the members of the *viginti-viri* in 238, served as *curator alvei Tiberis* and *curator Laurentium Lavinatium* between his ordinary consulship in 233 and his position as *praefectus urbi* in 255. The position of *curator Laurentium Lavinatium* was also fulfilled by Vir(i)us Lupus, descendant of one of the important generals of Septimius Severus. L. Marius Perpetuus, brother of Marius Maximus, another general of Septimius Severus, was *curator rei publicae Alviensium* and *Tusculanorum*.

[36] He served as *proconsul Asiae* for two years in a row which was highly unusual. It was also highly unusual that he was both *proconsul Africae* as well as *Asiae*. See Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 185; 217 and 224–225.

[37] Leunissen 1989, op. cit. (n. 2), 185.

The impact of crises on senatorial status and power

The crises of the third century caused changes in many fields, including the administration of the empire. Critical situations like barbarian invasions and usurpation called for many *ad hoc* appointments to enable men to solve specific crises. These men were often recruited from the military commanders and imperial staff acting in the provinces. They stayed in close vicinity to the emperors who were forced to spend most of their time in war-zones.

On the other hand, parts of the Empire that were not heavily struck by long-term problems, such as repeated invasions and enduring warfare, and had a traditionally high status within the Empire, for example the provinces of Africa and Asia, were continuously entrusted to loyal status set senators, who were also appointed to functions in Rome and Italy. Such senators were as always very well qualified to govern these parts of the Empire and were acceptable to local elites in those relatively rich, developed areas. In this way, the emperors gave senators the honours due to them without giving them too much actual military power. In earlier periods of the Principate, emperors had acted likewise towards the patrician nucleus of the senatorial order. Both parties, the emperors as well as the members of elite senatorial families, seemed to agree with this policy. The latter maintained their social status without taking too much risk, and the emperors were probably glad that certain mechanisms of the old system did not call for change but continued to function as they had done before. Keeping the senatorial families satisfied in this way would also add a lot to the legitimation of their position among the senators. However, the gradual disappearance of the coincidence of high social status and the ability to exercise power in the Roman Empire in the third century is undeniable.

Rome, September 2006

Appendix – The Careers of the Caesonii

Name	C. Caesonius Macer Rufinianus	L. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus	L. Caesonius Ovinius Manlius Rufinianus Bassus
Career until position as praetor	?? – triumvir capitalis ?178/180 (or 173?) – tribunus militum leg I Adiutricis ?? – quaestor provinciae Narbonensis ?? – tribunus plebis ca 185 – legatus proconsulis Baeticae ca 187 – praetor	?? – decemvir stlitibus iudicandis ca 215/217 (or ca 212?) – quaestor candidatus ca 220/222 (or ca 217?) – praetor candidatus	After 235? (240/245?) – triumvir capitalis After 235? (240/245?) – sevir turmae deducendae ?? – quaestor candidatus ?? – praetor candidatus
Career until position as consul	?? – legatus proconsulis Asiae ?? – curator r p Asculanorum ca 187/190 – legatus Aug legionis VII Claudiae ca 192 – proconsul Achaiae ca 193 curator r p Tarracinensium ?194–?197 – legatus Aug pr pr Lusitaniae ca 197/198 – consul suffectus ---------- ca 197 – curator r p Teanensium	?? – curator r p Suessanorum ?? – curator r p Tuscolanorum / Puteolanorum ?225/230 – legatus Africae eodem tempore vice proconsulis ?225/230 – consul suffectus	Before 260 – curator r p Beneventanorum ca 260 – consul suffectus
Consular career	?198–200 – curator alvei Tiberis ?200–?203 – legatus Aug pr pr Germaniae sup ?203/213 – curator aquarum et Miniciae ?213/215 (or 218/222?) – proconsul Africae ?? – curator r p Lanivinorum/ Lavininorum II ?222–235 (231–233?) – comes Aug	?225/230 – curator alvei Tiberis et cloacarum urbis ?230/235 – curator aquarum et Miniciae 238 – XXvir ex s c r p curandae Not before 240/241 – proconsul Africae 241/254 (242–244?) – electus ad cognoscendas vice Caesaris cognitiones 241/254 (246?) – praefectus urbi	?? – curator alvei Tiberis et cloacarum sacrae urbis ?? – legatus proconsulis Africae dioeceseos Carthaginiensis (praetorian?) ?? – curator coloniae Carthaginensium (praetorian?) ca 275? – proconsul Africae tertium ca 276/282 – electus a divo Probo ad praesidendum iudicium magnum ca 276/281 – iudex sacrarum cognitionum vice Caesaris sine appellatione cognoscens inter fiscum et privates item inter privates Roma ca 281/282 – iudex et in provincial Africa Spring/summer 283?-285 – comes Augg Fall 284 – consul II suffectus 285 – praefectus urbi
Priestly offices	?? – sodalis Aug	239/240 – frater Arv	?? – salius Palatinus After 274 – pontifex dei Solis ?? – pontifex maior

THE REAPPEARANCE OF THE SUPRA-PROVINCIAL COMMANDS IN THE LATE SECOND AND EARLY THIRD CENTURIES C.E.: CONSTITUTIONAL AND HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Frederik J. Vervaet

Introduction

This paper aims at examining and explaining the nature of some spectacular extraordinary commands from the reign of Marcus Aurelius to the reign of Philippus Arabs (161–249 C.E.). Although the initial plan was to focus primarily on the third century proper, the period between the reigns of Philippus Arabs (244–249) and Diocletian (284–305) is so chaotic that it becomes very hard to distinguish between the ordinary and the exceptional. After a brief definition of what will be considered an extraordinary command in this paper, we will first have to survey a number of relevant precedents from the preceding centuries. Indeed, the extant source material for the attested extraordinary commands from the period discussed is so limited that this gradual approach is the only means to develop a number of plausible explanations concerning the commands scrutinized in this paper, namely those held by C. Avidius Cassius in 169–175 and by C. Iulius Priscus in 244–249.

A matter of definition

Under the Empire, the only official distinction between provincial commanders was that between the governors of the public provinces, on the one hand, and the governors of the *provinciae Caesaris*, on the other hand. Whereas the first category of governors were all praetorians or consulars and all carried the title of proconsul, the rank and official titles of the latter category varied greatly. All but one of the most important imperial provinces were governed by praetorian or consular officials who held the title of *legatus Augusti pro praetore.* The key position of *praefectus Aegypti* and the ever increasing number of procuratorships, both

gubernatorial and financial, however, were the exclusive reserve of the equestrian order.

It is important to ascertain that there never existed such thing as an officially designated extraordinary command under the Empire. Nonetheless, it did occasionally happen that commands were created outside of the regular order, both in terms of geographical scope and powers granted. In this paper, we will focus primarily upon what one could perhaps best define as supra-provincial commands, commands which involved the superimposition of one commander-in-chief upon the existing administrations of a well-defined number of regular provinces. As the Emperor was legally entitled to freely dispose of his share of the provinces, multi-provincial commands involving the temporary union of certain imperial provinces under the command of a single governor were not that unique.[1] This means that, for example, the commands of Sextus Sentius Caecilianus (*suff.* ca. 76), who was *legatus Augusti pro praetore ordinandae utriusque Mauretaniae* in 75 and as such replaced the procurators who normally governed both Mauretanias,[2] or M. Cornelius Fronto (*suff.* 165), who held the position of *legatus Aug(g.) pro praetore trium Daciarum et Moesiae Superioris* in 169/170,[3] will not be given any further consideration, however spectacular their positions. Of those of the above-defined supra-provincial commands, special attention will be given to the ones comprising both imperial and public provinces, as the Senate was at least theoretically entitled to have its say in their admin-

[1] Within what he termed the "Multi-Provincial Commands in the Roman Empire", D. Potter, 'Palmyra and Rome: Odaenathus' Titulature and the Use of the Imperium Maius', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 113 (1996), 274f., was the first to draw a distinction between commands involving the combination of two or more provinces "into a 'joint province' that was governed by one man" and those involving "a grant of superior *imperium* to an individual so that he could give orders to provincial governors within a specified region". Potter rightly explains that "Previous studies of extraordinary governorships have tended to group governors of 'double provinces' with holders of *imperium* who were empowered to give instructions in provinces that had regularly appointed governors of their own. I have separated the two groups, as I believe that the two phenomena are distinct." Strangely enough, however, Potter still lumps together both indeed fundamentally different categories of commands under the label of 'multi-provincial commands'. For clarity's sake, it is, perhaps, better to clearly distinguish between, on the one hand, multi-provincial commands established through the provisory union of two or more provinces under the command of a single governor, and, on the other hand, supra-provincial ones, which assigned the supervision of two or more normally independent provincial administrations to one commander-in-chief.

[2] *AE* 1941, no. 79.

[3] *ILS* 1097 and 1098; cf. also 2311.

istration. This means that as far as the period from 161 to 249 C.E. is concerned, we will primarily discuss the commands of C. Avidius Cassius and C. Iulius Priscus.

The supra-provincial commands of the Early Empire: a brief survey

A first category of early imperial supra-provincial commands regards the relatively well-known extraordinary proconsulships from the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius. As is quite clear from the literary and epigraphic sources, men like Agrippa, Drusus and Tiberius, Gaius Caesar, Germanicus and Drusus Minor were granted proconsulships *extra ordinem*, outside of the regular, annual appointments of proconsuls for the administration of the public provinces. Their commands were created *ex auctoritate principis*, at the formal behest of the Emperor, by virtue of a decree of the Senate and a subsequent popular law, and generally lasted for five consecutive years (*in quinquennium*). Whereas the constitutive laws probably only concerned the *genus* and relative strength of the *imperium* and its duration, it were Prince and Senate who defined and redefined the specific tasks and geographical scope of the proconsuls involved. In 23 B.C.E., for example, Agrippa (in all likelihood) received a five-year *consulare imperium* and spent part of his tenure in the East.[4] In 18 and 13 B.C.E. respectively, Agrippa was given two more terms, his *consulare imperium* being redefined as *maius* with respect to that of the regular proconsuls in the final instance.[5] In 17 C.E., Senate and People redefined Germanicus' extraordinary proconsulship in that he was charged with the administration of all the lands from the Ionian coast to the borders of Egypt, his *consulare imperium* being now legally *maius* with respect to the proconsuls of the public provinces.[6] In my opinion, Tacitus' *Annales* 2.59 unequivocally shows that Germanicus was not legally entitled to enter Egypt without formal and explicit authorization on the part of Tiberius. After the reign of Tiberius, however, the conferral of

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[4] Dio Cassius 53.31.1 and Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* 15.350.

[5] Dio Cassius 54.12.4f. (18 B.C.E.) and 54.28.1 (13 B.C.E.).

[6] See W. Eck, A. Caballos and F. Fernández, *Das senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone patre* (München 1996), 40 (comments on pp. 157–162) and Tacitus, *Annales* 2.43.1; Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* 18.54; Velleius Paterculus 2.129.3 and Suetonius, *Caligula* 1.2. For the quinquennial duration of these special proconsulships, see F. Hurlet, 'Recherches sur la durée de l'*imperium* des "co-régents" sous les principats d'Auguste et de Tibère', *Cahiers du Centre Gustave Glotz* 5 (1994), 255–289.

such extraordinary proconsulships was limited to crown princes only, just as was the case with the *tribunicia potestas*. With the exception of, for example, Aelius Caesar's stay in Pannonia in 136/137, most of these Imperators-designate would stay in Rome to assist the Emperor in his administration of City and Empire.

This momentous evolution did not mean, however, that the practice of granting supra-provincial commands ceased to exist altogether. Domitius Corbulo's spectacular career in the Eastern provinces offers a first interesting example. Although Corbulo (*suff.* 39) had already governed the 'multi-provincial' complex of Cappadocia-Galatia (with Pamphylia) from 54/55 to 60, when Syria too was briefly added to his already vast gubernatorial responsibilities, it is especially the redefinition of his official position in the spring of 63 that is of real interest to this inquiry. After the humiliating defeat of L. Iunius Caesennius Paetus (*ord.* 61), who had been sent in 61 to relieve Corbulo of the command of Cappadocia-Galatia, Nero and his counsels decided to make a rather spectacular arrangement, accurately summarized in Tacitus' *Annales* 15.25.3. Tacitus here records that

> *Syriaeque exsecutio C. Cestio, copiae militares Corbuloni permissae; et quinta decuma legio, ducente Mario Celso e Pannonia, adiecta est. Scribitur tetrarchis ac regibus praefectisque et procuratoribus et qui praetorum finitimas provincias regebant iussis Corbulonis obsequi, in tantum ferme modum aucta potestate quem populus Romanus Cn. Pompeio bellum piraticum gesturo dederat.*
>
> The administration of Syria was entrusted upon C. Cestius, the military forces to Corbulo, with the addition of the fifteenth legion from Pannonia under the command of Marius Celsus. Instructions in writing were given to the tetrarchs, kings and prefects, and the procurators and the praetors in charge of the neighbouring provinces, to take their orders from Corbulo, whose powers were raised to nearly the same level as that given by the Roman People to Pompey for the conduct of the pirate war.

As is clear from Tacitus' summary and other indications in the sources, Corbulo reassumed the command of Cappadocia-Galatia, whereas Syria was now assigned to C. Cestius Gallus (*suff.* 42), on the condition, however, that Corbulo retained the command of the Syrian legions, whereas Gallus was to busy himself with Syria's cumbersome civil administration. Nero furthermore instructed all of the native tetrarchs, kings and prefects and the Roman procurators and those *legati Augusti pro praetore* who governed the provinces neighbouring Cappadocia-Galatia to obey Corbulo's orders.

In my opinion, three important observations can be made. First, Tacitus' account strongly suggests that it was Nero who made these

arrangements, a decree of the Senate being technically unnecessary as all territories concerned were part of Caesar's vast provincial dominion. Next, it is important to emphasize that Corbulo was given no new *imperium* whatsoever. As *legatus Augusti pro praetore* Corbulo simply continued to wield delegated *praetorium imperium*. Neither was this existing *imperium* made officially *maius* with respect to that of his fellow *legati Augusti pro praetore*, as the consular and praetorian *legati Augusti pro praetore* of Syria and Lycia-Pamphylia and all other official authorities in the Eastern part of the imperial provinces were instructed to obey his commands by virtue of imperial *mandata*.[7] All of this means that Corbulo's command of 63 was very different from that of, for example, Germanicus. The latter as proconsul held independent consular *imperium* and owed his office and supra-provincial powers to votes of Senate and People respectively, passed at the behest of the Emperor. Germanicus' *consulare imperium* was, moreover, redefined as *maius quam* with respect to that of the proconsuls governing the public provinces that fell within the official confines of his supra-provincial command.[8]

Pliny's extraordinary command in Pontus-Bithynia

Before discussing the supra-provincial commands of the late second and early third centuries C.E., it is useful to briefly highlight the equally interesting command of C. Plinius Caecilius Secundus (*suff.* 100) in Pontus-Bithynia, generally dated around 110–112 C.E.[9] Although this

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[7] *ILS* 232. Cf. Tacitus, *Annales* 15.17.2 for the fact that *legati Augusti pro praetore* were strictly tied to their imperial *mandata*.

[8] See F.J. Vervaet, 'Tacitus *Ann.* 15.25.3: A revision of Corbulo's *imperium maius* (A.D. 63–A.D. 65?)', in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History, Volume X* (Brussels 2000) 260–298 for a full discussion of Corbulo's command from 63 to 66. The generally accepted though mistaken view that Corbulo was granted "*imperium maius* über den ganzen Nahen Osten" was recently reiterated by C. Körner, *Philippus Arabs. Ein Soldatenkaiser in der Tradition des antoninisch-severischen Prinzipats* (Berlin and New York 2002), 60. Although Tacitus also styles the praetorian proconsul of Bithynia as praetor in *Annales* 1.74, he makes no mention whatsoever of the involvement of a public province in his remarkably complete summary of the measures taken in the spring of 63. Besides, the submission of a proconsul to Corbulo would have required a decree of the Senate. As in 67, Cn. Pompeius, too, had been officially empowered to draw the necessary funds from provincial authorities and was put in charge of a (far more impressive) series of *legati pro praetore*, Tacitus' aggrandizing statement that Corbulo's enhanced mandate recalled that of Pompeius against the pirates is not totally unfounded.

[9] For the abundant bibliography on the question of the exact chronology of Pliny's legateship in Pontus-Bithynia, see G. Alföldy, 'Die Inschriften des jüngeren Pliny und

public province was at the time normally governed by proconsuls of praetorian standing, *CIL* 5.5262 (Comum) records that Pliny administrated it as *legatus Augusti pro praetore consulari potestate*, and this *ex senatus consulto missus ab Imperatore Caesare Nerva Traiano*.[10] In other words, Pliny was sent to govern Pontus-Bithynia by decree of the Senate and in the capacity of *legatus Augusti pro praetore* with consular *imperium*.

Pliny's unprecedented position involves several remarkable oddities.[11] Rather than having him appointed to an extraordinary proconsulship, which would have involved a formal vote of the People, the Emperor chose to work through the Senate. There is every indication that, evidently on the Emperor's own motion, the Senate authorized him to send Pliny as an imperial legate to Pontus-Bithynia, and at once decreed that he should administer this province *consulari potestate*.[12] As for the reason of this grant of consular *imperium* to an imperial legate invested with the administration of a public province, one might, at first sight, be tempted to argue that Pliny was given *postestas consularis* to buttress his official position vis-à-vis those regular staff members in the public provinces who also carried delegated *praetorium imperium*, to wit the quaestor and the *legatus proconsulis*. However, Trajan and the Senate could have perfectly ordered all regular staff in the province to stay in office and obey Pliny' every command without upgrading his *imperium*, as Nero had done before in the case of Corbulo. Besides, as the Emperor's appointee

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seine Mission in Pontus et Bithynia', in *Idem, Städte, Eliten und Gesellschaft in der Gallia Cisalpina. Epigraphisch-historische Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart 1999), 221 n. 4.

[10] Cf. also the fragmentary inscription published in *CIL* 6.1552 = 11.5272 (Hispellum). In my opinion, Th. Mommsen's readings of both texts are still to be preferred over those of E. Bormann and G. Alföldy, who argue that Pliny was sent into the province *proconsulari potestate*. The term *proconsulare imperium*, however, only surfaces in literary sources from the reign of Tiberius, and is (to the best of my knowledge) not documented elsewhere by epigraphy. In my opinion, such references as Tacitus, *Annales* 2.56.4, 2.71.1 (cf. Cicero, *In Catilinam* 3.15) and 14.18.2; Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.3.3 and Suetonius, *Domitianus* 1 (Domitianus as praetor urbanus with *consulare imperium*); and *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Vita Aemiliani* 22.10 and *Vita Probi* 13.1 strongly suggest that, in terms of public law, the *imperium* of imperial *legati pro praetore* and proconsuls remained the *praetorium* and *consulare imperium* respectively. Ultimately, however, the question whether Pliny was sent *consulari potestate* or *proconsulari potestate* is irrelevant to the argument of this paper.

[11] Alföldy 1999, op. cit. (n. 9), 236, rightly emphasizes that Pliny's mission (and position) was wholly unprecedented.

[12] To some extent, this upgrade of *imperium* reminds of the Republican practice of the *praetura pro consule*.

would govern the province instead of the regular proconsul,[13] it is quite possible that the Senate equally authorized him to appoint Pliny's *quaestor* and legates. As a legate wielding merely delegated *imperium*, Pliny could not normally have done so himself without explicit authorization. In light of G. Alföldy's conclusive demonstration that Pliny's mission was a provisional imperial interference in what continued to be a public province,[14] it is, however, far more likely that the arrangement was made out of consideration for the Senate and the existing administrative division between public and imperial provinces. As the first category of provinces was regularly governed by officials with *consulare imperium*, official propriety dictated that the Emperor's man in the public province should be given all of the proconsul's regular *potestas* and *insignia*.[15] Since Pliny was of consular rank at the time of his extraordinary mission in Pontus-Bithynia, it should, moreover, not be doubted that he was escorted by twelve lictors.[16] The fact that Pliny surpassed the regular (praetorian) proconsul of Pontus-Bithynia in terms of both senatorial rank and outward trappings would obviously further boost his authority and prestige

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[13] See Mommsen's reconstruction of *CIL* 6.1552 = 11.5272: *ex s(enatus) c(onsulto) pro/[co(n)s(ulis) loco in prouincia Ponto] et Bithynia et legatus / [pro pr. Imp. Traiani Aug. prouinciae eiusdem]* in *Gesammelte Schriften* 4 (Berlin 1906), 443–446. In Alföldy's reconstruction of the text (1999, op. cit. (n. 9), 234) the term *legatus* figures twice, which seems to be rather unlikely. Mommsen's suggested reading has the advantage of summarizing precisely what happened: Pliny being sent to Pontus-Bithynia instead of a proconsul by decree of the Senate and as *legatus Augusti pro praetore*.

[14] Alföldy 1999, op. cit. (n. 9), 237. Alföldy, loc. cit. (and especially 237 n. 38) is right to suggest that it is most likely that C. Iulius Cornutus Tertullus, who governed Pontus-Bithynia as *legatus Augusti pro praetore* from ca. 112 to ca. 115 (*CIL* 14.2925 = *ILS* 1024) as Pliny's immediate successor was also granted the same enhanced power.

[15] Compare P. Eich, 'Proconsulis appellatio specialis est' (review article of E. Meyer-Zwiffelhoffer, Πολιτικῶς ἄρχειν. *Zum Regierungsstil der senatorischen Statthalter in den kaiserlichen griechischen Provinzen*, Stuttgart 2002), *Scripta Classica Israelica* 23 (2004), 237: "Die plausibelste Deutung dieser Titulatur ist die, daß Plinius die gleichen Rechte wie Proconsuln hatte, gleichzeitig aber kaiserlicher Legat war." Eich also makes the plausible suggestion that this arrangement "stellte ein zusätsliches Element der Legitimation dar und sollte vielleicht seine Autorität in der krisengeschüttelten Provinz stärken."

[16] Correctly so H.M. Cotton, 'Cassius Dio, Mommsen and the quinquefascales', *Chiron* 30 (2000), 234. See Dio Cassius 53.13.4 and 8 for the fact that from 27 B.C.E., only consular proconsuls were entitled to twelve lictors, whereas their praetorian colleagues had only six. Regardless of their senatorial rank, all *legati Augusti pro praetore* alike employed only five lictors. *Contra* A.N. Sherwin White, *The Letters of Pliny. A Historical and Social Commentary* (Oxford 1966), 81f. and Alföldy 1999, op. cit. (n. 9), 240, who claim that Pliny was given only six lictors, just like the praetorian proconsuls he replaced. Alföldy further wrongly suggests that all holders of *proconsularis potestas* received six lictors, whereas only holders of *consularis potestas* were entitled to twelve.

within the troubled province. The importance of his mission perfectly accounts for this additional deviation from customary practice.

Pliny's official title presents another particularity: rather than being dispatched as *legatus Augusti pro consule*, he still retained the traditional title of *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, regardless of the formal upgrade of his *imperium*. There are various ways to explain this remarkable decision. T.C. Brennan recently argued that *imperium* could only be delegated at the level of *praetorium imperium*, grants of derived consular *imperium* being legally impossible.[17] Although this indeed seems to have been the rule for the Republic, Trajan was definitely not the man to flinch from such a constitutional innovation, the more so as he did venture to send Pliny to a public province with an unprecedented title. In my opinion, this arrangement powerfully demonstrates that the official titles of the governors of the respective categories of provinces were increasingly becoming generic denominations. At any rate, Pliny's appointment and entitlement was a significant step towards the dissociation of official title and actual powers held by the official involved. The arrangement also was an important forerunner of the dissolution of the Augustan provincial settlement.

The extraordinary commands from Marcus Aurelius to Philippus Arabs

After this preliminary survey we can now proceed to the most important section of this contribution, the discussion of the supra-provincial commands of C. Avidius Cassius (*suff.* 166?) and C. Iulius Priscus. Probably in 166 C.E., in the immediate aftermath of the Parthian war, M. Aurelius and Lucius Verus put Avidius Cassius in charge of Syria as consular *legatus Augg. pro praetore*.[18] Probably shortly after the untimely death of L. Verus in 169, Cassius was invested with the supreme command of all provinces past the Aegean Sea, as Dio Cassius records in 71.3.1[2] that,

> Τὸν μέντοι Κάσσιον ὁ Μᾶρκος τῆς Ἀσίας ἁπάσης ἐπιτροπεύειν ἐκέλευσεν. αὐτὸς δὲ τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἴστρον βαρβάροις,Ἰαζυξί τε καὶ Μαρκομάνοις,

[17] T.C. Brennan, *The Praetorship in the Roman Republic* (Oxford 2000), 36f. (cf. also 642 and 647). In my opinion, Brennan's suggestion that only holders of consular *imperium* could delegate *praetorium imperium* is rather doubtful.

[18] In the epigraphic records of his tenure as governor of Syria (*IGRR* 3.1261 and 1270) Cassius is typically styled *consularis* (ὑπατικός) rather than *legatus Augusti pro praetore*.

> ἄλλοτε ἄλλοις χρόνον συχνὸν ὡς εἰπεῖν δι' ὅλλου τοῦ βίου, τὴν Παννονίαν ἔχων ὁρμητήριον, ἐπολέμησε.[19]
>
> Cassius, however, was ordered by Marcus to have charge of all Asia. The emperor himself fought for a long time, in fact, almost his entire life, one might say, with the barbarians in the region of the Ister, with both the Iazyges and the Marcomanni, one after the other, using Pannonia as his base.

Even though there is no further relevant source material on Cassius' official position until his enigmatic rebellion and death in 175, it may still be possible to formulate some plausible hypotheses about his extraordinary command. Since Cassius' extended power sphere at any rate comprised the public province of Asia, the arrangement must have involved a vote of the Senate. On the analogy of what was decided with regard to Pliny's position in Pontus-Bithynia around 110, the Senate may have raised Cassius' *imperium* to consular, as it would have been wholly inappropriate to subordinate the consular proconsul of Asia to the command of a legate holding merely praetorian *imperium* and carrying only five *fasces*. In terms of both public law and senatorial propriety, such an arrangement would have made no sense at all. Although it is generally believed that Cassius was granted *maius imperium* throughout the Eastern Empire,[20] there is no indication whatsoever that he was ever given independent *imperium*.[21] Therefore, it is perhaps better to assume that the Senate and the Emperor instructed all other officials in the Eastern provinces to obey Cassius' commands, *mutatis mutandis* on the model of the arrangement made more than a century ago on behalf of Domitius Corbulo. Last but not least, the fact that, probably in 172 C.E., Marcus Aurelius ordered Avidius Cassius to quell a major revolt in Egypt strongly suggests that this key province did not fall within his enlarged

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[19] Translation and numbering of the text passage as in the Loeb edition. Cf. also Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum* 2.1.13 (563): ὁ τὴν ἑῴαν ἐπιτροπεύων Κάσσιος. For an elaborate discussion of Cassius' meteoric career from the Parthian war up to the conferral of his supra-provincial command, see especially M.L. Astarita, *Avidio Cassio* (Roma 1983), 39–59.

[20] Cf. Astarita 1983, op. cit. (n. 19), 56–58 and 86 and, more recently, D. Potter 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 280f. Potter (loc. cit., cf. also p. 274) is equally wrong to suggest that Avidius Cassius was given "the post of *corrector* in the east".

[21] All recorded instances of (proposed) grants of (conditional) *consulare imperium maius quam* concern holders of independent *imperium auspiciumque*: Cn. Pompeius in 57 B.C.E. (motion defeated), Cassius Longinus in 43 B.C.E. (motion defeated), Augustus in 23 B.C.E., Agrippa in 13 B.C.E. and Germanicus in 17 C.E.

sphere of command.[22] In this respect only, his supra-provincial command did resemble that of Germanicus, who had to supervise more or less the same geographical area.

At all events, the spectacular redefinition of Cassius' position in 169 is another signal indicator of the progressive erosion of the Augustan distinction between public and imperial provinces and the traditional titles of proconsul and *legatus Augusti pro praetore*. It was unprecedented that public and imperial provinces alike were put under the command of an official appointed directly by the Emperor. Although it should not be doubted that Marcus Aurelius did scrupulously involve the Senate in his decision to appoint a kind of imperial Viceroy in the East, the arrangement underscores the growing imperial preference for drastic interference in the public provinces.

Finally, an inscription from Timgad from 247–249 records that C. Iulius Priscus, brother of Philippus Arabs (244–249), held the otherwise unknown position of *rector Orientis*.[23] Apart from this, there is every indication that Priscus probably held the *praefectura praetorio* twice, a first time still before the accession of his brother and then again during the later part of the latter's reign, and that he held the both epigraphically and papyrologically attested office of *praefectus Mesopotamiae*, probably in between his two tenures as prefect of the Guard.[24] At all events, it is beyond all doubt that he owed the position of *rector Orientis* to his brother as Emperor. The same papyrus from 245 that records his prefecture of Mesopotamia (διασημότατος ἔπαρχος Μεσοποταμίας)[25] also provides important further clues as to the precise nature of his official position in the East, since it also attests him as administering justice from Antiochia (where he resided for at least one period of eight months) as διέπων

[22] For the revolt of the so-called Bucoli and its ruthless suppression, see Dio Cassius 72.4. H. Halfmann, *Die Senatoren aus dem östlichen Teil des Imperium Romanum bis zum Ende des 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* (Göttingen 1979), 179, rightly indicates that Dio Cassius' use of the passive voice (loc. cit., εἰ μὴ Κάσσιος ἐκ Συρίας πεμφθεὶς) unambiguously suggests that Cassius received orders to interfere in Egypt from Syria, and that those *mandata* can only have been issued by Marcus Aurelius. Therefore, Astarita 1983, op. cit. (n. 19), 86f., is wrong to suggests that Cassius' enhanced powers enabled him to interfere in Egypt as he saw fit, and that he entered the province either at the invitation of the *praefectus Aegypti* or at his own discretion. Astarita, loc. cit., is equally mistaken to believe that "dopo il precedente di Germanico, il problema [of a senator entering Egypt] non si pone più". Halfmann, loc. cit., however, is equally wrong to argue that Avidius Cassius was only put in charge of Syria and Arabia in 169/170.

[23] *CIL* 3.14149[5] = *ILS* 9005.

[24] See Körner 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 55–57.

[25] Cf. *IGRR* 3.1201f., ἔπαρχος τῆς Μεσοποταμίας.

τὴν ὑπατείαν, i.e., "holder of the highest office".[26] On the basis of this papyrus, some scholars are inclined to identify this second office with that of *rector Orientis*.[27] Most scholars, however, believe that he exceptionally combined two regular governorships, viz. the strategically important equestrian prefecture of Mesopotamia, on the one hand, and Syria Coele, normally governed by consular *legati Augusti pro praetore*, on the other hand.[28] According to C. Körner, who adheres to the second view and even suggests that Priscus also directly assumed the governorship of other provinces, the title of *rector Orientis* "sollte zum Ausdruck bringen, dass Priscus mehrere Statthalterschaften gleichzeitig ausübte".[29]

As M. Peachin, however, rightly points out that there were several governors of Syria precisely during Priscus' term as *rector Orientis*,[30] the most plausible reconstruction of the command structure in the East seems to be the following one. When Philippus Arabs came to power in 244, he not only appointed his brother to the at that time key office of *praefectus Mesopotamiae*, but also decided to entrust him with the high command in the entire East. To that means, he invested his brother with the unprecedented office of *rector Orientis*. As Zosimus records that Philippus Arabs entrusted him with the command of the armies in Syria and

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[26] *Pap. Euphr.* 1, ll. 3 and 19f. – first published by D. Feissel and J. Gascou, 'Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrate (IIIe siècle après J.-C.)', *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (1989), 545–557; and then again by the same authors in 'Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrate (IIIe siècle après J.-C.): I. Les petitions (*Pap. Euphr.* 1 à 5)', *Journal des Savants* (1995), 67–84. In my opinion, "holder of the highest office" should be preferred over Körner's suggestions (2002, op. cit. [n. 8], 58 + n. 186): "zu übersetzen mit 'den Konsulat oder eine konsulare Statthaltershaft'" and "Vielmehr bezeichnet ὑπατεία eindeutig die konsulare Gewalt."

[27] Feissel and Gascou 1989, op. cit. (n. 26), 552–554; F. Millar, *The Roman Near East 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (Cambridge and London 1993), 155f. ("'holding the *hypateia*', an expression which seems to indicate his [i.e., Priscus'] overall command of the region."); and M. Peachin, *Iudex vice Caesaris. Deputy Emperors and the Administration of Justice during the Principate* (Stuttgart 1996), 176f. ("it looks as though regular governors continued to function somehow simultaneously with, yet under the thumb of a supra-provincial *rector Orientis*").

[28] W. Eck, 'C. Iulius Octavius Volusenna Rogatianus. Statthalter einer kaiserlichen Provinz', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 90 (1992), 201; Feissel and Gascou 1995, op. cit. (n. 26), 80–83; M. Christol, *L'Empire romain du IIIe siècle. Histoire politique 192–325 après J.-C.* (Paris 1997), 99f.; C. Badel and A. Béranger, *L'Empire romain au IIIe siècle après J.-C. Textes et documents* (Paris 1998), 190 and C. Körner, 'Ein neuer Papyrus zur römischen Verwaltung im Osten des Reiches under Kaiser Marcius Iulius Philippus Arabs (244–249 n. Chr.)', in U. Pfister and M. de Tribolet (eds.), *Sozialdisziplinirung – Verfahren – Bürokraten. Entstehung und Entwicklung der modernen Verwaltung* (Basel 1999), 291.

[29] Körner 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 59.

[30] Peachin 1996, op. cit. (n. 8), 176f.

that he went on to govern the peoples in the East, and since it is papyrologically recorded that he also administered justice from Antiochia, the position of *rector Orientis* clearly empowered him to wield the supreme command in all matters military and civil throughout the lands across the Aegean.[31] Priscus' position resembles that of Avidius Cassius to the extent that both men combined the command of a concrete province (Mesopotamia and Syria respectively) with the overall supervision of the other Eastern provinces. Like Marcus Aurelius before him, Philippus Arabs, too, was fully absorbed by the laborious wars on the Danube and affairs in Rome from 245. The main differences with the position of Avidius Cassius, however, are constituted by the facts that Priscus apparently owed his position exclusively to the Emperor, like the regular *correctores*, and that he never assumed senatorial rank. More importantly, however, all of this also means that Priscus' rectorship of the East was a genuine imperial office which carried real and wide responsibilities.[32] As it clearly was Priscus task to supervise and safeguard the Eastern provinces on behalf of his brother rather than to restore law and order or carry through vast reorganizations, he was made *rector*, not *corrector*. This subtle though conspicuous distinction in title may also have served

[31] Zosimus 1.19.2 (Πρίσκον μὲν ἀδελφὸν ὄντα τῶν κατὰ Συρίαν προεστήσατο [viz. Philippus Arabs] στρατοπέδων) and 1.20.2 (τὸν Πρίσκον ἄρχειν τῶν ἐκεῖσε [viz. κατὰ τὴν ἑῴαν] καθεσταμένον ἐθνῶν). Körner 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 59, interprets the second reference as indicating "dass Priscus mehrere Provinzen gleichzeitig verwaltete". His explanation of the first one, however, runs counter to his argument that Priscus assumed direct command of (among other provinces) Syria: "Diese Passage scheint zwar auf die syrische Statthalterschaft anzuspielen. Es ist jedoch wahrscheinlicher, dass Zosimos den Begriff Συρία allgemein für den gesamten Nahen Osten, nicht nur für die Provinz *Syria Coele* verwendet. Die Stelle umschreibt somit ebenfalls eine provinzenübergreifende Funktion." In my opinion, Peachin 1996, op. cit. (n. 27), 177, rightly suggests that "it looks as though regular governors continued to function somehow simultaneously with, yet under the thumb of a supra-provincial *rector Orientis*." In n. 94, Peachin further points to the fact that Claudius Capitolinus was *praeses Arabiae* in 245–246, i.e., during Priscus' tenure as *rector Orientis*.

[32] *Contra* Körner 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 54 who insists that the denomination of *rector Orientis* concerns "einen Titel, nicht…ein Amt"; cf. also p. 59: "Im Gegensatz zum *corrector*… handelte es sich um einem Titel, nicht um ein Amt." This view runs counter to Körner's own suggestions (55 and 57f.) that this title involved certain "Kompetenzen", and that "Zweifellos muss es sich dabei um eine wichtige Position im Osten des Reiches gehandelt haben". From the moment a title is not purely honorific and carries certain official prerogatives, it *ipso facto* also regards an office. Therefore, the distinction drawn by Körner is an artificial one. Besides, the enclitic – *que* in *CIL* 3.14149[5] = *ILS* 9005 (*et praef. / praet. rect[o]riq. / Orientis*) further suggests that, just like the *praefectura praetoria*, it concerns an office, not a mere title.

to officially differentiate Priscus' extraordinary position from that of the regular imperial correctors. As there is no reason to believe that his supra-provincial command did not comprise proconsular Asia, one can, perhaps, speculate that Philippus Arabs also invested Priscus with consular *imperium*.[33] It should, however, not be doubted that the Emperor officially instructed all regular officials in the East to heed Priscus' commands.[34] On the basis of a reference in Zosimus, some scholars presume that under the reign of Aurelianus, one Marcellinus (*ord.* 275) also combined the offices of *praefectus Mesopotamiae* and *rector Orientis*.[35]

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[33] During the discussion following the presentation of this paper, Professor W. Eck made the suggestion that Priscus held no *imperium* whatsoever since such matters had become irrelevant and all necessary arrangements were now made through imperial *codicilla*. That regular correctors and curators held *imperium pro praetore* is clear from, e.g., *ILS* 8826 = *IGRR* 3.174 (Ancyra), where one C. Iulius Severus is attested as having been "sent with five *fasces* to Bithynia as *corrector* and *curator* by the deified Hadrian." As imperial *legati pro praetore* also carried five *fasces*, it should not be doubted that Severus (and all other correctors and curators) also held *praetorium imperium*. In my opinion, a couple of interesting references in the *Historia Augusta* (*Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Vita Aemiliani* 22.10 (*fasces consulares*) and *Vita Probi* 13.1) further suggest that Iulius Priscus, too, must have held some kind of *imperium* as *rector Orientis*, if only for tradition's sake.

[34] Unfortunately, the dearth of source material makes it impossible to establish whether or not the Senate was involved. If so, its role was probably limited to raising Priscus' delegated *imperium* to a consular level.

[35] Zosimus 1.60.1 (τοῦ καθεσταμένου τῆς μέσης τῶν ποταμῶν παρὰ βασιλέως ὑπάρχου καὶ τὴν ἑῴας ἐγκεχειρισμένου διοίκησιν); cf. especially A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale and J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* 1 (Cambridge 1971), 544 (Marcellinus I): "His title would appear to have been *praefectus Mesopotamiae rectorque Orientis*". *Contra* Potter 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), especially 274 and 281, who compares the command of Odaenathus with that of, for example, Avidius Cassius and Iulius Priscus, Körner 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 61, rightly explains that the position of Odaenathus fundamentally differed from that of Iulius Priscus and Marcellinus in that his successive appointments to the offices of *dux Romanorum* (in 262) and, perhaps, *corrector totius Orientis* (just one of several interpretations of *CIS* 2.3971, cf. Potter 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 272) by Gallienus only formalized the position the Palmyrene king had already attained through his own efforts and victories over both Roman pretenders and Persians. For a recent discussion of Odaenathus' titulature and position in the East, see especially Potter 1996, op. cit. (n. 1). The command of Severianus in Moesia and Macedonia (Zosimus 1.19.2, Σεβηριανῷ δὲ τῷ κεδεστῇ τὰς ἐν Μυσίᾳ καὶ Μακεδοινίᾳ δυνάμεις ἐπίστευσεν), however, seems to have been multi-provincial rather than supra-provincial; *contra* Potter 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 278, where Severianus is listed in the category of "Governors with Supra-Provincial *Imperium* or Holders of *Imperium Maius* and Individuals Referred to as Commanders with Special *Imperium* for a War from Tiberius to Philip the Arab" (p. 277), with, among others, Avidius Cassius and Iulius Priscus; and Körner 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 62f., who also seems to put the commands of Priscus and Severianus on a par.

General conclusions

The nature of the extraordinary, supra-provincial commands of the late second and third centuries C.E. further highlights the general tendencies of this tempestuous age of transition. Unlike the extraordinary proconsuls of the Early Empire, who held independent *imperium auspiciumque* by virtue of statute law, it concerns imperial officials whose powers were (re)defined by the Emperor, and, if need be, the Senate.[36] The commands of Pliny the Younger, Avidius Cassius and Iulius Priscus powerfully underscore the growing imperial preference for drastic and direct interfere in the administration of imperial and public provinces alike.[37] In this respect, these commands are signal indicators of the erosion of the Augustan provincial arrangement and significant steps towards active and exclusive imperial control of the whole provincial dominion. This evolution also meant that the original distinction between governors of public and imperial provinces became increasingly meaningless, especially in the event of proconsuls being put under the command of imperial officials with derived, be it enhanced powers and status. Therefore, Probus' decision to invest all *praesides* or governors with the *ius praetorium*, the *praetorium imperium*,[38] was nothing but the logical conclusion of a process in which the proconsulate evolved into a largely honorific and purely civil office. The supra-provincial commands of this age also further demonstrate the rise of the equestrian order. Whereas Pliny still passed through a normal senatorial career, Avidius Cassius was adlected *inter quaestorios* and Iulius Priscus maintained his

[36] Cf. P. Eich, *Zur Metamorphose des politischen Systems Roms in der Kaiserzeit. Die Entstehung einer "personalen Bürokratie" im langen dritten Jahrhundert* (Berlin 2005), 359, "In der ersten Phase des Prinzipates folgte man bei der Ausgestaltung dieser großräumige Einsatzbereiche noch republikanischen Vorbildern und erließ wohl entsprechende *leges*. Im zweiten und dritten Jahrhundert sind solche Prozeduren nicht mehr belegt und vermutlich auch nicht mehr in Anwendung gekommen." Eich's (p. 359 n. 4) suggestion that Corbulo's command, too, was constituted by law, however, is wrong altogether. Popular votes were only required if the extraordinary commander was to hold independent *imperium auspiciumque*.

[37] Cf. Eich 2005, op. cit. (n. 36), 360, "Besonders seit Marcus läßt sich eine Neigung der Zentrale erkennen, Provinzkomplexe einzelnen Amtsträgern längerfristig zu unterstellen." For a plausible explanation of why the Emperor and his counsels found it increasingly necessary to submit a well-defined number of regular provincial governors to supra-provincial imperial agents, see also Eich 2005, op. cit. (n. 36), 360.

[38] This must be the scope of one of Probus' reforms summarized in *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Vita Probi* 13: *permisit patribus ut…proconsules crearent, legatos proconsulibus darent, ius praetorium praesidibus darent.*

equestrian status even after the accession of his brother and his own rise to unprecedented power.[39] Last but not least, the reappearance of the supra-provincial commands from the late second century C.E. was an official acknowledgment of the fact that in case of serious internal or external crises, the administration of Empire simply required this kind of overarching commands.[40] The Tetrarchy, then, can be construed as an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to reintroduce the early imperial system of 'vice-regents', be it on a structural and systematic basis and within the framework of radically reorganized imperial and administrative institutions.[41]

Ghent, June 2006

[39] Körner 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 57.

[40] The revolt of Avidius Cassius, however, immediately revealed the inherent danger of such arrangements.

[41] Compare also Potter 1996, op. cit. (n. 1) 271, "Diocletian's decision to create a college of *Augusti* and *Caesares* stands at the end of a long history of power sharing that was defined in different ways." Eich 2005, op. cit. (n. 36), 359 rightly observes that the "supraprovinzialer Kommanden" of the third century C.E. were "Vorläufer der mehrstufigen spätantiken Provinzialadministration."

LA CRISI DEL TERZO SECOLO E L'EVOLUZIONE DELLE ARTIGLIERIE ROMANE

Salvatore Martino

I Romani posero sempre grande attenzione alle macchine da lancio. Le artiglierie delle legioni al tempo di Augusto erano composte da lanciagiavellotti e lanciapietre con la griglia propulsiva realizzata tramite diverse tavole e listelli di legno giuntati insieme secondo uno schema abbastanza complicato,[1] in linea con la tradizione della poliorcetica ellenistica ma con alcune modifiche (bracci curvi anziché diritti per una maggiore corsa angolare, un minor numero di pezzi per formare la griglia, un profilo ad "ala di gabbiano" in visione dall'alto per la griglia della *ballista* lanciapietre onde accentuarne la forma palintona ecc.).[2] Ma già nel primo secolo d.C. un trattatello in greco attribuito ad Erone di Alessandria descrive una lanciagiavellotti di concezione nuova, convenzionalmente chiamata oggi *cheiroballistra*, la cui griglia propulsiva era realizzata da quattro semplici parti metalliche (due καμβέστρια) per ospitare i fasci di nervi da porre in torsione, una traversa superiore ad arco o καμάριον e una traversa inferiore a scaletta o κλιμάκιον) unite in maniera semplice e funzionale.[3] La vecchia lanciagiavellotti descritta da Vitruvio restò in servizio almeno fino al 69 d.C.,[4] come dimostrano alcuni reperti provenienti da Cremona e ascrivibili alle

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[1] Per esse E.W. Marsden, *Greek and Roman Artillery: Historical Development* (Oxford 1969), 174–187.

[2] E. Schramm, *Die antiken Geschütze der Saalburg* (Berlin 1918), 40–46; Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 199–206; E.W. Marsden, *Greek and Roman Artillery: Technical Treatises* (Oxford 1971), 185–205; L. Callebat et P. Fleury, *Vitruve, de l'architecture livre X* (Paris 1986), 199–239; A. Wilkins, 'Scorpio and Cheiroballistra', *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 11 (2000), 77–101; F. Russo, *Tormenta. Venti secoli di artiglierie meccaniche* (Roma 2002), 227–232.

[3] Marsden 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 206–233; A. Wilkins, 'Reconstructing the Cheiroballistra', *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 6 (1995), 5–60; R. Harpham and D.W.W. Stevenson, 'Heron's Cheiroballistra (a Roman Torsion Crossbow)', *Journal of the Society of Archer – Antiquaries* 40 (1997), 13–17; A. Iriarte, 'Pseudo-Heron's Cheiroballistra: a(nother) reconstruction', *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 11 (2000), 47–75; Russo 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 232–243.

[4] Vitruvio 10.10.1–6.

battaglie combattute durante le guerre civili di quell'anno. Dalle campagne di questa città proviene infatti la scudatura frontale bronzea di una lanciagiavellotti Vitruviana, con una iscrizione che ci informa che il pezzo apparteneva alla *Legio IIII Macedonica* e che fu costruito nel consolato di Marco Vinicio e Tauro Statilio Corvino, cioè il 45 d.C.[5] La *cheiroballistra* era, in ogni caso, il modello standard di lanciagiavellotti in servizio nelle legioni almeno dal tempo delle campagne daciche di Traiano, come ci mostra la Colonna traiana,[6] e lo restò almeno fino ai tempi di Giustiniano.[7] La sua facilità di assemblaggio, la sua robustezza, la praticità di trasporto, la leggerezza e, non ultima, la potenza (tutte qualità dimostrate dalle ricostruzioni moderne) la rendevano difficilmente migliorabile.[8] Ampi margini di miglioramento restavano invece per incrementare le prestazioni dei lanciapietre e un paio di reperti archeologici sembrano indicare che proprio il terzo secolo d.C. fu un epoca di sperimentazione in questo senso, che condusse poi ad una soluzione del problema nuova, distaccantesi da tutta la tradizione costruttiva dei pezzi di artiglieria classica.

Nel 1971 vennero ritrovati, fra le rovine dell'antica città di Hatra, nell'attuale Iraq, dei resti metallici di una macchina da lancio.[9] I reperti, risalenti al primo quarto del terzo secolo d.C., erano composti da tre flangie, quattro sbarrette di torsione, sei gorbie per le assi della griglia e l'intera scudatura anteriore di protezione e rinforzo, della larghezza di due metri circa. L'aspetto più interessante è che su questa scudatura sono sagomate le due scanalature per alloggiare i bracci in posizione

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[5] D. Baatz, 'Ein Katapult der legio IV Macedonica aus Cremona', *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Römische Abteilung* 87 (1980), 283–299.

[6] Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 188–190; Marsden 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 209.

[7] Procopio, *De bello Gothico* 1.21.14–18; cfr. Marsden 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 246–248. Ma il modello potrebbe essere restato in servizio nell'esercito bizantino fino a Costantino Porfirogenito ed oltre, dal momento che costui nomina (*De administrando Imperio* 53.133) "πολεμικὰ ἅρματα καὶ τὰς χειροβολίστρας". Cfr. anche *De cerimoniis*, (Bonn 1829), 670 (χειροτοξοβολίστρων). Wilkins 2000, op. cit. (n. 2), 91–92.

[8] Oltre a Wilkins 1995, op. cit. (n. 3) e Iriarte 2000, op. cit. (n. 3) si vedano anche J. Anstee, 'Tour de Force. An experimental catapult/ballista', *Studia Danubiana Simposia* 1 (1998), 133–139; A. Zimmermann, 'Zwei ähnlich dimensionierte Torsiongeschütze mit unterschiedlichen Konstruktionsprinzipien: Rekonstruktionen nach Originalteilen aus Cremona (Italien) und Lyon (Frankreich)', *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 10 (1999), 137–140. Interessante è W. Gurstelle, *The Art of the Catapult: build Greek Ballistae, Roman Onagers, English Trebuchets and more Ancient Artillery* (Chicago 2004).

[9] D. Baatz, 'The Hatra Ballista', *Sumer* 33 (1977), 141–151; D. Baatz, 'Recent finds of ancient artillery', *Britannia* 9 (1978), 224–245; D.B. Campbell, 'Auxiliary Artillery Revisited', *Bonner Jahrbücher* 186 (1986), 117–132.

di riposo (cioè quando la macchina non è carica). Fin qui nulla di strano, dal momento che le stesse scanalature sono presenti anche sui resti delle piastre di Ampurias e Caminreal:[10] la cosa insolita è che, mentre nei reperti appena menzionati le scanalature sono laterali (il che è normale, dal momento che laterali erano anche i bracci), nella scudatura di Hatra queste sono sulla parte interna del frontale. Ciò significa che i bracci di questa macchina puntavano in avanti quando essa era scarica e che giravano con la punta verso il fusto e il mirino quando si caricava il pezzo.

Questa eccezionale scoperta ha ridato credito ad una vecchia teoria della seconda metà del diciannovesimo secolo,[11] secondo la quale le antiche catapulte avevano i bracci mobili verso l'interno. Le rappresentazioni di macchine da lancio che ci sono pervenute dalla civiltà classica (all'epoca non note o non comprese), tutte con bracci verso l'esterno (ad esempio l'altare di Pergamo,[12] la lapide di Moderato,[13] ecc.), avevano completamente screditato questa ipotesi: la macchina di Hatra ripropone la questione, nel senso che è possibile che almeno alcune catapulte possono aver avuto bracci mobili verso l'interno.

Il problema è particolarmente sentito per quel che riguarda la *cheiroballistra*, poiché le uniche antiche rappresentazioni in nostro possesso (quelle sulla Colonna traiana) non mostrano i bracci. Una serie di scoperte archeologiche ci ha fornito diversi reperti di questo pezzo, particolarmente le semi-griglie per i fasci e le traversa superiori ad arco da Orşova, Gornea e Lione,[14] ma ciò non aiuta a risolvere i problemi perché le semi-griglie (che hanno, lo ricordo, una scanalatura per alloggiare il braccio su una delle barre) sono speculari e possono essere montate indifferentemente a destra o a sinistra della traversa ad

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[10] Ampurias: Schramm 1918, op. cit. (n. 2), 40–46; Caminreal: J.D. Vicente, M. Pilar Punter y B. Ezquerra, 'La catapulta tardo-republicana y otro equipamiento militar de La Caridad (Caminreal, Teruel)', *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 8 (1997), 167–199.

[11] V. Prou, 'La chirobaliste d'Héron d'Alexandrie', *Notices et extracts des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale et autres Bibliothèques* 26 (1877), 1–319.

[12] Schramm 1918, op. cit. (n. 2), 35; Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), tav. 3; D. Baatz, 'Hellenistische Katapulte aus Ephyra (Epirus)', *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Athenische Abteilung* 97 (1982), 211–233.

[13] Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 185 e tav. 1; cfr. anche Baatz 1980, op. cit. (n. 5).

[14] Orşova, Gornea: D. Baatz und N. Gudea, 'Teile spätrömischer Ballisten aus Gornea und Orşova (Rumänien)', *Saalburg-Jahrbuch* 31 (1974), 50–72. Si veda anche Baatz 1978, op. cit. (n. 9), 232–238; Lione: D. Baatz et M. Feugère, 'Éléments d'une catapulte romaine trouvée à Lyon', *Gallia* 39 (1981), 201–209.

arco.[15] I reperti di Lione sono perfettamente in linea con la ricostruzione tradizionale; quelli di Gornea sono molto piccoli (le semi-griglie sono alte appena una ventina di centimetri) e forse appartengono ad una *manuballista* propriamente detta, un pezzo brandito a mano che Vegezio dice armare i *tragularii*,[16] fanti leggeri del tardo impero;[17] i ritrovamenti più problematici sono quelli di Orşova, probabilmente risalenti alla metà del terzo secolo d.C.

Da questa località rumena provengono, insieme con altri reperti, due semi-griglie alte 36 cm e larghe 17,50 cm e una traversa ad arco lunga ben 1,25 m. L'eccessiva lunghezza della traversa si potrebbe spiegare col fatto che i ritrovamenti appartengono a due macchine diverse: ma i sostegni ad "Y" della traversa ad arco si incastrano perfettamente nelle semi-griglie, e ciò lascia poco spazio al dubbio che i pezzi sono della stessa *cheiroballistra*. Il diametro e la lunghezza delle semi-griglie sono troppo piccoli e la conseguenza è che, con una ricostruzione tradizionale (ovvero con i bracci esterni), il proietto sarebbe stato troppo debole a causa dell'eccessiva distanza dei bracci: pertanto, è stato proposto che essi curvassero verso l'interno e che la lunghezza della traversa ad arco fosse necessaria a consentire questo movimento senza impacci, cioè senza che i bracci si urtassero nello scattare in avanti o ostacolassero, frapponendosi, la corsa del proietto.[18] In base a questi dati, ci si è spinti anche oltre e si è proposto che tutte le *cheiroballistrae* avessero bracci correnti verso l'interno (ipotesi nota come "Inswinging Theory").[19] Chi scrive ritiene che sia saggio, al momento, non prendere una posizione netta: tuttavia vuol provarsi egualmente nel cercare di sistemare i dati in un quadro generale coerente.

L'invenzione della *cheiroballistra* provvide l'esercito romano della migliore lanciagiavellotti che si fosse mai vista. Tuttavia, è lecito supporre che i lanciapietre rimasero, per qualche tempo, il vecchio modello a griglia palintona lignea.[20] Diversi *architecti* legionarii devono

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[15] Per altri reperti D. Baatz, *Bauten und Katapulte des römischen Heeres* (Stüttgart 1994), 127–135.

[16] Vegezio, *Epitoma rei militaris* 2.15; 3.14 (*manuballistarii*); 4.22 (l'antico nome della *manuballista* era *scorpio*).

[17] La *tragula* era un corto giavellotto a punta quadrata dotato di propulsore. Cfr. M.C. Bishop and J.C.N. Coulston, *Roman Military Equipment* (London 1993), 160–162; M. Feugère, *Weapons of the Romans* (Charleston 2004), 183–185.

[18] Iriarte 2000, op. cit. (n. 3), 61.

[19] A. Iriarte, 'The Inswinging Theory', *Gladius* 23 (2003), 111–140.

[20] Sul significato di questo termine E.P. Barker, 'Παλίτονον and εὐθύτονον', *Classical Journal* 14 (1920), 82–86; Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 23; Marsden 1971, op. cit.

aver provato a costruire un lanciapietre a griglia metallica: un passo ovvio e consequenziale quando si considerino le superiori prestazioni delle *cheiroballistrae* lanciagiavellotti rispetto alle loro precedenti di legno. Scagliare pietre però comporta problemi diversi dallo scagliare giavellotti. Le formule di calibrazione usate dagli antichi si basavano, ad esempio, su due parametri diversi: la lunghezza del dardo per le lanciagiavellotti e il peso del proiettile per i lanciapietre,[21] e i diversi problemi da affrontare e risolvere delle due tipologie di macchine da lancio antiche sono all'origine del loro differenziarsi in lanciagiavellotti eutitone e lanciapietre palintoni. I vari tentativi degli ingegneri romani di costruire una *cheiroballistra* lanciapietre utilizzando lo stesso schema della sua versione lanciagiavellotti devono essere risultati insoddisfacenti: nell'ambito di questi tentativi, qualcuno avrà avuto l'idea di ottenere una spinta più accentuata per il pesante proietto litico consentendo una maggiore corsa angolare dei bracci (mentre per le lanciagiavellotti si continuò ad usare l'impianto tradizionale con i bracci all'esterno). Per ottenere la massima prestazione possibile si sarà pensato di realizzare un pezzo con i bracci correnti all'interno. L'innovazione avrà avuto una certa diffusione ed uno dei lanciapietre così costruiti è giunto fino a noi con i reperti di Orşova. In ogni caso, per un motivo o per l'altro, anche le macchine così costruite devono essere state giudicate insufficienti o non rispondenti ai bisogni dal momento che il progetto fu abbandonato, fra terzo e quarto secolo d.C., in favore di un altro: quello dell'*onager*, l'unico modello di lanciapietre che Ammiano Marcellino e Vegezio mostrano di conoscere. Va sottolineato che questa ricostruzione, pur se tiene conto, conciliandole, di tutte le teorie avanzate fin'ora e basata su tutta la documentazione disponibile, è largamente ipotetica perché l'evidenza in nostro possesso è ben lungi dall'essere completa. Non si può escludere che nuovi ritrovamenti possano completamente sconvolgere il quadro delineato sopra.[22]

(n. 2), 44–45; Y. Garlan, *Recherches de poliorcétique grecque* (Athènes et Paris 1974), 223 n. 2. Cfr. anche P. Fleury, 'Vitruve et la nomenclature des machines de jet romaines', *Revue des Études Latines* 59 (1981), 216–234; P. Fleury, 'Le vocabulaire latin de la mécanique' in P. Radici Colace (ed.), *Atti del secondo Seminario Internazionale di Studi sui Lessici Tecnici Greci e Latini. Messina, 14–16 dicembre 1995* (Napoli 1997), 27–40.

[21] Sulle formule di calibrazione e le problematiche connesse Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 24–47.

[22] Vorrei qui richiamare l'attenzione su un passo di Vitruvio (10.11.1) quasi ignorato da tutti gli esegeti: "*Ballistarum autem rationes variae sunt et differentes, unius effectus comparatae. Aliae enim vectibus, suculis, nonnullae polyspastis, aliae ergatis, quaedam etiam tympanorum torquentur rationibus*". Egli dice espressamente che esistono molti tipi di *ballistae*, cioè lanciapietre,

L'*onager* è l'unico pezzo d'artiglieria di cui si possa dire con sicurezza che si distaccava completamente dallo schema costruttivo fusto-slitta tipico delle artiglierie a torsione greco-romane.[23] Esso aveva i pregi di unire un'estrema semplicità d'impianto ad una grande potenza ed una notevole gittata. Nel quarto secolo d.C. costituiva il lanciapietre tipico usato dai Romani, ma il progetto è probabilmente più antico:[24] Filone di Bisanzio (200 a.C. circa) tramanda, in una lista di macchine difensive per far precipitare massi contro i lavori d'assalto degli assedianti alla base delle mura, un pezzo chiamato μονάγκων (letteralmente "monobraccio").[25] Dopo questo accenno, il μονάγκων sembra sparire per trecento anni dalle fonti, fino a riapparire all'improvviso negli scritti di Apollodoro di Damasco come termine di paragone per un particolare dispositivo bellico da lui descritto.[26] L'*onager* appare in pieno quarto secolo d.C. nelle pagine di Ammiano Marcellino,[27] il quale lo descrive un po' più in dettaglio e lo presenta come ben diffuso ed utilizzato

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e che egli ne descrive solo uno (oggi considerato invece – e a torto – come l'unico in servizio nell'esercito romano), quello più razionale perché meglio rispondente ai criteri geometrici delle formule di calibrazione. Ad uno dei pezzi accennati da Vitruvio potrebbe alludere anche Erone, *Belopoeica* 84.9–85.6.

[23] Questo sistema derivava dal metodo usato per incordare e tendere il γαστραφέτης: Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 5–12. Per i dettagli: Erone, *Belopoeica* 76.6–79.5; Vitruvio 10.10.3. Cfr. Marsden 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 194–195; Callebat-Fleury 1986, op. cit. (n. 2), 207–210; Wilkins 2000, op. cit. (n. 2), 81–82; Russo 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 130–137.

[24] Secondo Barker 1920, op. cit. (n. 20), 85 la catapulta eutitona inventata, secondo Diodoro Siculo (14.41) a Siracusa nel 399 a.C., sarebbe stata un incrocio tra il γαστραφέτης e il μονάγκων. Questa tesi è altamente improbabile poiché il *Belopoeica* di Erone, sunto dai perduti Ὑπομνήματα di Ctesibio di Alessandria del III secolo a.C., si struttura come una storia delle macchine da lancio da quelle a flessione d'un arco composito a quelle a torsione di fasci di tendini, e non accenna al μονάγκων. Cfr. Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 3. G. Rawlinson, *Five Great Monarchies of the Eastern World*, I (London 1871), 472 riferisce di aver visto in un bassorilievo assiro la rappresentazione di due μοναγκῶνες: *contra* Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 53, che dimostra anche come i presunti pezzi d'artiglieria nominati nella Bibbia (*Cronache* 2.26.15, *Ezechiele* 4.2 e 21.22) non siano tali. I. Pimouguet Pedarros, 'L'apparition des premiers engins balistiques dans le monde grec et hellénisé: un état de la question', *Revue d'Études Anciennes* 102 (2000), 5–26 esclude che i lanciapietre possano essere stati inventati dai Persiani nel VI–V secolo a.C. Cfr. P. Briant, 'A propos du boulet de Phocée', *Revue des Études Anciennes* 96 (1994), 111–114.

[25] Filone di Bisanzio, *Mechanica* 5.3.10. Garlan 1974, op. cit. (n. 20), 377–378. Non può essere escluso però che questo accenno sia una inserzione bizantina.

[26] Apollodoro di Damasco, *Poliorcetica* 188.2–9; O. Lendle, *Schildkröten: Antike Kriegsmaschinen in Poliorketischen Texten* (Wiesbaden 1975), 93–96; O. Lendle, *Texte und Untersuchungen zum technischen Bereich der antiken Poliorketik* (Wiesbaden 1983), 26–28; D. Sullivan (ed.), *Siegecraft: two tenth-century instructional manuals by "Heron of Byzantium"* (Washington 2000), 221.

[27] Ammiano 23.4.4–7.

nell'esercito tardoromano.[28] La descrizione fornitaci da Ammiano sembra riflettere le varie fasi dell'assemblaggio. Non è il caso di esaminarne dettagliatamente l'impianto: basterà notare che dal punto di vista tecnico la macchina era l'equivalente della sola semigriglia di un pezzo a torsione posizionata orizzontalmente al piano d'appoggio invece che verticalmente e, nonostante le difficoltà di brandeggio testimoniate dallo stesso Ammiano,[29] la semplicità del progetto, la facilità di montaggio e la terrificante potenza ottenuta anche grazie alle leggi di conservazione del momento angolare sfruttate dalla rotazione della fionda, applicata alla sommità del braccio per allocare il proietto in fase di lancio (la quale imprimeva un surplus di accelerazione e potenza) ne facevano un'arma efficacissima e funzionale.[30]

Quando e perché l'*onager* divenne il lanciapietre standard dell'esercito romano? A questa domanda è impossibile dare una risposta precisa. Tra le rovine del forte di High Rochester in Inghilterra sono venute alla luce due epigrafi che ricordano la costruzione di una piattaforma per artiglieria (*ballistarium*) durante il regno di Elagabalo e la ricostruzione o il restauro della stessa sotto Alessandro Severo.[31] Il sito ospitava, nell'epoca in questione, la *Cohors I fida Vardullorum equitata milliaria*,[32] un'unità di ausiliari, il che pone infiniti problemi sul rapporto che intercorreva fra *auxilia* e artiglierie, poiché queste ultime erano un'esclusiva legionaria.[33] È stato ipotizzato che il *ballistarium* in questione potesse identificarsi con la postazione che, secondo Ammiano,[34] doveva essere eretta per posizionare l'*onager* in batteria e che quindi questo pezzo fosse già di normale utilizzo nel primo quarto del terzo secolo d.C.[35] L'ipotesi non è da scartare a priori, ma non può essere argomentata.

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[28] Ad esempio Ammiano 19.2.7; 20.7.10; 24.2.13; 24.4.28; 31.15.12. P.E. Chevedden, 'Artillery in Late Antiquity: prelude to the Middle Ages' in I. Corfis and M. Wolfe (eds.), *The Medieval City under Siege* (Woodbridge 1995), 131–173; D. Baatz, 'Katapulte und mechanische Handwaffen des spätrömischen Heeres', *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 10 (1999), 5–19.

[29] Ammiano 19.7.6.

[30] V.G. Hart and M.J.T. Lewis, 'Mechanics of the *onager*', *Journal of Engineering Mathematics* 20 (1986), 345–365.

[31] E. Birley, *Research on Hadrian's Wall* (London 1961), 242–244; D.B. Campbell, '*Ballistaria* in first to mid-third century Britain: a reappraisal', *Britannia* 15 (1984), 75–84;*CIL* 5.1044–1045; *CIL* 5.1046.

[32] Campbell 1984, op. cit. (n. 31), 80–82.

[33] Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 184.

[34] Ammiano 23.4.5.

[35] Una ipotasi di I.A. Richmond, 'The Romans in Redesdale', in M.H. Dodds (ed.), *History of Northumberland.*15 (Newcastle 1940), 97; Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 191.

La piattaforma poteva essere stata eretta per ospitare anche altri pezzi d'artiglieria,[36] niente dice che solo l'*onager* avesse bisogno di questo tipo di opera accessoria per stare in batteria.[37]

Nel 279 d.C. il governatore della Licia-Panfilia, Terenzio Marciano, assediò la roccaforte di un brigante locale,[38] Cremna in Pisidia,[39] costringendola alla resa.[40] I lavori d'assedio dei Romani, riemersi dagli scavi condotti sul sito,[41] comprendevano una gigantesca collinetta artificiale eretta di fronte alla principale posizione difensiva di Cremna.[42] La collinetta era chiaramente destinata ad ospitare pezzi d'artiglieria. All'interno delle fortificazioni di Cremna sono emerse molte palle per catapulta del peso di circa 25 Kg.[43] Il peso è indicativo, poiché questo è proprio il calibro del più grosso pezzo di artiglieria vitruviano, la *ballista* palintona da un talento.[44] Niente vieta di pensare che i proietti in questione potessero essere stati scagliati da un *onager*, ma secondo tutta la tecnica costruttiva di macchine da lancio della tradizione ellenistica e vitruviana ogni parte della macchina, anche la più piccola, rispondeva ad un canone rigidamente determinato che metteva in relazione tra loro il peso del proietto da scagliare e i diametri dei fasci da porre in torsione.[45] Naturalmente, non era necessario fare ogni volta i calcoli: ben presto le misure si standardizzarono ed è facile imaginare che gli artiglieri romani venissero istruiti a costruire un determinato numero di tipi di pezzi di calibro ben preciso (da cinque mine, da dieci mine, da un talento…) e, forse, venissero ad essi fornite anche tabelle con misure predeterminate, come agli artiglieri della Prima Guerra Mondiale venivano date tavole logaritmiche che correlavano l'alzo alla gittata dei cannoni, senza che essi dovessero procedere ogni volta a calcolare

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[36] Campbell 1986, op. cit. (n. 9), 122.

[37] Campbell 1984, op. cit. (n. 31), 82–84.

[38] S. Mitchell, 'Native rebellion in the Pisidian Taurus' in K. Hopwood (ed.), *Organised Crime in Antiquity* (London 1999), 155–175.

[39] S. Mitchell, *Cremna in Pisidia, an Ancient City in Peace and in War* (London 1995).

[40] Zosimo 1.69–70.

[41] S. Mitchell, 'The siege of Cremna' in D.H. French and C.S. Lightfoot (eds.), *The Eastern Frontier of the Roman Empire* 1 (Ankara 1988), 311–328.

[42] S. Mitchell, 'Archaeology in Asia Minor 1985–1989', *Archaeological Reports* 36 (1989–1990), 83–131.

[43] Mitchell 1989–1990, op. cit. (n. 42), 123–124.

[44] Vitruvio 10.11.3.

[45] A.G. Drachmann, 'Remarks on the ancient catapults' in *Actes du septième congrès international d'histoire des sciences* (Jerusalem 1953), 280–282; Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 24–45; Marsden 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 197–200; Russo 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 189–198.

questa relazione.[46] È forte il sospetto, data la scarsa o nulla variabilità del peso dei proietti trovati a Cremna, che essi siano stati scagliati da un lanciapietre palintono del tipo descritto da Vitruvio e che questa macchina fosse dunque ancora in servizio alla fine del terzo secolo d.C.[47] Certo, è possibile che i proietti di Cremna siano stati scagliati da *onagri*. Per essere adottato nella maniera massiccia testimoniata da Ammiano, questo pezzo doveva assolvere tutti i compiti dei suoi predecessori e anche di più:[48] poteva dunque ben lanciare palle da un talento. Ma, come testimoniano le ricostruzioni moderne,[49] l'*onager* era un pezzo più flessibile di una *ballista* vitruviana, soggetta a rompersi se il proietto era troppo leggero o ad imprimere al proietto medesimo un'enegia cinetica insufficiente se questo era troppo pesante. Gli assedianti di Cremna non avrebbero avuto ragione di penare per ridurre pietre in calibri così omogenei e uniformi se fossero stati equipaggiati con *onagri*.[50]

A mio parere, l'adozione dell'*onager* come modello dei lanciapietre standard in seno all'esercito romano è da riconnettere in qualche modo con i dominati di Diocleziano e Costantino. Particolarmente il primo, con la sua politica di fortificazione dell'impero, è indiziato.[51] L'*onager*, lo si è detto sopra, esisteva ben prima dei tempi di Ammiano. Gli accenni ad esso ricorrono sempre in un contesto ossidionale. Era una macchina strettamente connessa con la difesa di una cortina muraria. Un elemento

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[46] Le misure date da Vitruvio 10.11.3–9 presuppongono chiaramente un prontuario di questo tipo.

[47] Per un'analisi sull'uniformità delle classi di peso, e dei relativi calibri, dei proiettili ritrovati a Cartagine, Rodi, Pergamo e Marsiglia (tutti per lanciapietre palintoni) Marsden 1969, op. cit. (n. 1), 79–83. Cfr. Russo 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 180–186 per quelli ritrovati a Pompei, risalenti a Silla. Centinaia di proiettili ritrovati ad Hatra non sono stati, purtroppo, né catalogati né studiati: D.B. Campbell, *Greek and Roman Artillery 399 BC–AD 363* (London 2003), 20.

[48] Cfr. P.F. Drucker, 'Modern technology and ancient jobs', *Technology and Culture* 4 (1963), 277–281; O. Pi Sunyer and T. De Gregori, 'Cultural resistance to technological change', *Technology and Culture* 5 (1964), 247–253.

[49] R. Payne Gallwey, *The Crossbow* (London 1903), 279–299; E. Schramm, 'Μονάγκων und *onager*', *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen* 2 (1918), 259–271; Marsden 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 254–265.

[50] Si pensi, ad esempio, alla disomogeneità di forma e peso dei proiettili di mangano ritrovati nel castello medioevale di Saranda Kolones a Cipro: H.S. Megaw, 'Supplementary excavations on a castle site at Paphos, Cyprus, 1970–1971', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972), 322–343; J. Rosser, 'Excavations at Saranda Kolones, Paphos, Cyprus 1981–1983', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 39 (1985), 81–97.

[51] Sulle fortificazioni tardoromane: S. Johnson, *Late Roman Fortifications* (London 1983); A. Johnson, *Roman Forts* (London 1983); J. Lander, *Roman Stone Fortifications* (Oxford 1984); P. Southern and K.R. Dixon, *The Late Roman Army* (London-New York 1996), 127–167; H. Elton, *Warfare in Roman Europe A.D. 350–425* (Oxford 1996), 155–174.

sopra tutti lo testimonia: il fatto che l'*onager* fosse brandeggiabile solo con molta difficoltà.[52] I difensori, potendosi avvalere delle postazioni di tiro preparate sulle mura durante i periodi di pace,[53] non avevano a soffrire troppo della poca brandeggiabilità dell'*onager*, che veniva posto in batteria già in un punto con il campo di tiro ideale. Inoltre, la flessibilità di questo pezzo nello scagliare pietre di vario peso metteva al riparo dalla scarsità di munizioni adatte e consentiva l'uso anche di munizioni di fortuna (tegole, mattoni) in caso di necessità. L'erezione dei numerose fortificazioni durante il regno di Diocleziano e Costantino può aver dato impulso allo sviluppo di questa macchina il cui progetto giacque per secoli semi-dimenticato nei manuali di παρασκευαστικὰ (le preparazioni per resistere ad un assedio).

L'adozione dell'*onager* rappresentò un considerevole progresso nel campo delle artiglierie meccaniche. Esso offriva svariati vantaggi che non devono essere sottovalutati: era più semplice, facile e veloce da assemblare rispetto ad una *ballista* vitruviana; questa era composta da numerosi componenti che non figurano nel progetto dell'*onager* e che richiedevano molta attenzione nella realizzazione e nel montaggio, e non poca abilità carpentieristica e preparazione matematica da parte degli artiglieri.[54] Anche l'unico punto in cui l'*onager* poteva essere inferiore ad una *ballista* vitruviana, la brandeggiabilità, è probabile che debba essere riconsiderato: Vegezio accenna ad un affusto mobile trainato da buoi.[55]

Quello dell'adozione dell'*onager* fu un progresso innescato dalla crisi del terzo secolo d.C., che portò a rivalutare un vecchio modello di macchina usato nella difesa muraria, facendone scoprire i pregi. Fu la crisi del terzo secolo d.C. la molla che portò alla soluzione del problema postosi, per l'esercito romano, nel secondo secolo d.C. dopo l'introduzione della *cheiroballistra*, cioè quello di dotarsi di un lanciapietre più semplice e potente, come più semplice e potente era la nuova

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[52] Ammiano 19.7.6–7.

[53] S. Johnson 1983, op. cit. (n. 49), 31–54 e 78–81; A. Johnson 1983, op. cit. (n. 49), 53–55; Lander 1984, op. cit. (n. 49), 198–262 e 302–306.

[54] Marsden 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 263–265.

[55] Vegezio, *Epitoma rei militaris* 2.25: "*Onagri… in carpentis bubus portantur armatis*". Questa frase potrebbe apparire decisiva, ma bisogna considerare che Vegezio può aver scritto riferendosi alla *antiqua legio* (che può aver conosciuto lanciapietre palintoni montati su carri) usando il vocabolo corrente ai suoi giorni per designare il lanciapietre.

lanciagiavellotti entrata in linea con Traiano.[56] Un progresso talmente funzionale, talmente rispondente alle esigenze della classe dominante che aveva prodotto questo bisogno da sopravvivere alla scomparsa e/o trasformazione di questa stessa classe dominante poiché l'*onager*, ovvero i suoi diretti discendenti, il mangano,[57] la petriera e il trabucco,[58] restarono in uso fino alla metà del XVI secolo.[59]

Un fenomeno analogo e comparabile è l'adozione delle batterie di lanciarazzi in seno agli eserciti contemporanei. I primi razzi, come è noto, furono usati in Cina dal settimo secolo d.C., forse addirittura dal primo secolo d.C.[60] In Europa essi furono, curiosamente, contemporanei degli ultimi trabucchi e restarono sporadicamente in uso fino alla Guerra Civile Americana.[61] I progressi nella costruzione dei cannoni sfavorirono l'ulteriore sviluppo di questo tipo di arma che venne dimenticata restando solo per le segnalazioni luminose. Nella seconda guerra mondiale l'esercito russo, a corto di materiale bellico e bisognoso di un'arma che offrisse grande potenza e concentrazione di fuoco, reintrodusse i razzi, montandoli in batteria sul cassone di banalissimi camion.[62] La "Katiusha" si rivelò un'arma così micidiale, semplice, funzionale e

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[56] Cfr. Le considerazioni generali di W. Kaempffert, 'War and Technology', *The American Journal of Sociology* 46 (1941), 431–444; R.P. Multhauf, 'The scientist and the improver of technology', *Technology and Culture* 1 (1959), 38–47; B.C. Hacker, 'Greek catapults and catapult technology: Science, technology and war in the ancient world' *Technology and Culture* 9 (1968), 34–50; R.F. Weigley, 'War and the paradox of technology', *International Security* 14 (1989), 192–202; G. Raudzens, 'War-winning weapons: the measurement of technological determinism in military history', *The Journal of Military History* 54 (1990), 403–434; A. Roland, 'Theories and models of technological change: semantics and substance', *Science, Technology and Human Values* 17 (1992), 79–100; A. Roland, 'Science, technology and war', *Technology and Culture* 36 (1995), 83–100.

[57] B.S. Bachrach, 'Medieval siege warfare', *The Journal of Military History* 58 (1994), 119–133.

[58] La petriera: W.T.S. Tarver, 'The traction trebuchet: a reconstruction of an early medieval siege engine', *Technology and Culture* 36 (1995), 136–167; il trabucco: P.E. Chevedden, 'The invention of the counterweight trebuchet: a study in cultural diffusion', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000), 71–116.

[59] L'ultimo, inglorioso, uso del trabucco fu a Tenochtitlàn nel 1521: Bernal Diaz del Castillo, *Historia de la conquista de Mexico* 155; Bernardino de Sahagùn, *Historia de la Nueva España* 12.37.

[60] W. Ling, 'On the invention and use of gunpowder and firearms in China', *Isis* 37 (1947), 160–178.

[61] E.M. Emme, 'Introduction to the history of rocket technology', *Technology and Culture* 4 (1963), 377–383; E.M. Emme, 'International history of rocketry and astronautics symposium: Constance, W. Germany, october 1970', *Technology and Culture* 12 (1971), 477–486; P.D. Olejar, 'Rockets in early american wars', *Military Affairs* 10 (1946), 16–34; R.W. Donnelly, 'Rocket batteries of the Civil War', *Military Affairs* 25 (1961), 69–93.

[62] G.A. Tokaty, 'Soviet rocket technology', *Technology and Culture* 4 (1963), 515–528.

devastante, pur nella sua rozzezza, che ad essa possono essere ascritte molte vittorie tattiche dell'Armata Rossa, non ultima Stalingrado, dove le batterie di "Katiusha" appostate sulla sponda orientale del Volga annientavano sistematicamente ogni conquista tedesca. Oggi il razzo ha soppiantato quasi del tutto il cannone. Un'arma antica, fino ad allora poco usata, fu ripescata sotto la spinta della necessità per essere utilizzata in un contesto nuovo, dove si rivelò un progresso tremendamente efficace e funzionale, al punto da sostituire quasi completamente la sua concorrente.[63]

Napoli, settembre 2006

[63] L. White jr., 'The act of the invention: causes, contexts, continuities and consequences', *Technology and Culture* 3 (1962), 486–500.

CRISIS AND THE ECONOMY

TIBERIUS GRACCHUS, LAND AND MANPOWER

John W. Rich

It is a pleasure to join with the other contributors to this volume in saluting Lukas de Blois for his many achievements, and in particular for his foundation of the Impact of Empire Network. One of the numerous topics in Roman history which he has illuminated is the military aspect of the crisis of the Roman Republic.[1] In this essay I offer him some reflections on its initial phase.

In the years immediately preceding the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus in 133 B.C., tribunes of the *plebs* had shown more frequent militancy than at any time since the fourth century, most notably in disputes over levies for the dangerous and unrewarding wars in Spain, which twice led to the imprisonment of the consuls, and in the carrying of laws instituting the secret ballot for elections and trials.[2] However, these disputes had been resolved, and Gracchus had doubtless anticipated a similar outcome for his agrarian law. He will, of course, have expected bitter opposition and a tribunician veto, but he will have assumed that, in the face of the mobilization of mass popular support and the backing the law enjoyed from senior senators, including his father-in-law Ap. Claudius Pulcher, the *princeps senatus*, and P. Mucius Scaevola, currently consul, its opponents would back down. That was what past practice will have led Gracchus to expect, as most recently with L. Cassius Longinus' law of 137 introducing the ballot for trials, which was carried when the opposing tribune was induced to withdraw his veto by the *auctoritas* of Scipio Aemilianus.[3] However, M. Octavius refused to drop his veto against Gracchus' law, and, as Badian argued in a classic study, this was the year's first and decisive departure from precedent.[4]

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[1] L. de Blois, *The Roman Army and Politics in the First Century Before Christ* (Amsterdam 1987).

[2] On these developments L.R. Taylor, 'Forerunners of the Gracchi', *Journal of Roman Studies* 52 (1962), 19–27, remains fundamental.

[3] Cicero, *Brutus* 97; cf. *De legibus* 3.37, *Pro Sestio* 103.

[4] E. Badian, 'Tiberius Gracchus and the beginning of the Roman Revolution', in H. Temporini (ed.), *ANRW* 1.1, 668–731, at 690–701. Cf. D. Stockton, *The Gracchi* (Oxford 1979), 61 ff.

Unwilling to abandon his bill, Gracchus responded with another novelty, the deposing of his fellow tribune, an act which he justified by the claim that a tribune who frustrated the people's will had deprived himself of office, but which to his opponents was a violation of the tribune's sacrosanctity.[5] Gracchus' deposing of Octavius ended his prospects of a conventional political career: as Cicero remarked, Octavius "broke Tiberius Gracchus by his endurance".[6] Gracchus chose to continue on the offensive, with his measures relating to Attalus' legacy and his standing for re-election. This candidature led to further scenes of turbulence, finally resolved in a moment which has recently been brilliantly dissected by Linderski. In his interpretation, Scipio Nasica, the *pontifex maximus*, changed his plain toga for the *toga praetexta* which priests wore only when performing their priestly function, and displayed its purple border on his veiled head to show that he "was proceeding to consecrate Gracchus and his followers to the wrath of the gods".[7] As Nasica and his supporters advanced, the Gracchan resistance crumbled, and Gracchus himself and many of his followers then lost their lives, the first mass bloodshed in a Roman civil dispute.

Gracchus' tribunate and death "divided one people into two parties", as Cicero made Laelius observe in a dialogue set in 129 B.C.[8] In other circumstances, its impact might nonetheless have been short-lived, but Gracchus' example was emulated and taken further first by his brother, and then by others exploiting the opportunities afforded by the Jugurthine and Cimbric Wars. It was in these years that the competing discourses and stances of *populares* and *optimates* were formed, and that a range of issues were raised which were in due course to play their part in bringing down the Republic. Of these the most potent was the issue with which Gracchus had begun, land. Thus Gracchus' tribunate can properly be seen not just as a year of crisis, but as the beginning of the long crisis which ended in the Republic's fall.

In political terms then, the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus was undeniably a critical event. But what of the circumstances which gave rise to his contentious land law? Was he himself responding to a crisis

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[5] The opposing claims: Plutarch, *Tiberius Gracchus* 14.5–15.9.

[6] Cicero, *Brutus* 95 (*fregit Ti. Gracchum patientia*); cf. *De legibus* 3.24.

[7] J. Linderski, 'The pontiff and the tribune: the death of Tiberius Gracchus', *Athenaeum* 90 (2002), 339–366 (quotation from 364). See also E. Badian, 'The pig and the priest', in H. Heftner and K. Tomaschitz (eds.), *Ad fontes: Festschrift für Gerhard Dobesch* (Vienna 2004), 263–272.

[8] Cicero, *De republica* 1.31 (*diuisit populum unum in duas partis*).

when he proposed it? This is the question to which the remainder of this paper will be addressed.

Appian and Plutarch paint a vivid picture of a crisis of land and manpower, according to which the public land (*ager publicus*), intended for occupation by the poor, had been taken over by the rich, who worked it with slaves, and as a result the free poor had become reluctant to rear children and their numbers had gone into decline. An earlier law had been passed imposing a limit of 500 *iugera* (= 126 hectares) on holdings, but this had proved ineffective. Gracchus accordingly introduced his law under which this limit was to be enforced and the land recovered parceled out in small allotments.[9]

Appian's and Plutarch's accounts of this agrarian crisis provide the basis for a modern interpretation, which has been long established in the scholarship of the period, but has been developed most fully by Toynbee and with greatest sophistication by Brunt and Hopkins.[10] Whereas the ancient accounts focus on the public land, their modern counterparts postulate social and economic developments affecting private as well as public land and relating particularly to the period from the Second Punic War on. The profits which they had made from the successful wars of the early second century and the ready supply of cheap slaves which those wars generated encouraged the elite to invest in vine and olive plantations and in ranching, using slave workers. At the same time the high incidence and the long terms of military service, which were a feature of the period from the Second Punic War on, caused severe difficulties for the peasants from whom Rome's armies

[9] Appian, *Bella ciuilia* 1.7–11; Plutarch, *Tiberius Gracchus* 8–9. Appian's implication that it was only Rome's Italian allies who were affected by the crisis is his own distortion: see further H. Mouritsen, *Italian Unification: A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (London 1998), 11–22. The law imposing the 500 *iugera* limit is attributed by other sources to C. Licinius Stolo and L. Sextius, tribunes in 367 B.C. Almost all scholars have followed Niebuhr in supposing that the limit applied only to holdings of *ager publicus*, but it is more likely that it applied to all landholdings, as is clearly implied by all the sources other than Appian (so, briefly, W. Kunkel, *Staatsordnung und Staatspraxis der römischen Republik. 2: Der Magistratur* [München 1995], 493–496; D.W. Rathbone, 'The control and exploitation of *ager publicus* in Italy under the Roman Republic', in J.-J. Aubert (ed.), *Tâches publiques et enterprise privée dans le monde romain* (Neuchâtel 2003), 135–178, at 143–147). I hope to argue elsewhere that a limit on all landholding was introduced in 367, but Gracchus' revival of the limit applied only to *ager publicus*.

[10] A.J. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy* (Oxford, 1965), vol. 2 *passim*; P.A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.–A.D.14* (Oxford 1971; rev. edn. 1987), especially 44 ff., 269 ff., 391 ff.; K. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge 1978), 1–98. For other versions of the traditional account see e.g. Stockton 1979, op. cit. (n. 4), 6 ff.; A.H. Bernstein, *Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus: Tradition and Apostasy* (Ithaca and London 1978), 71 ff.

were drawn; as a result, many farms failed, making their land available for exploitation by the rich. This impoverishment of the peasantry led to a decline in the freeborn population of rural Italy, citizen and allied, and to an even steeper drop in the numbers of the *assidui*, those with the property qualification for military service. This in turn led to recruiting difficulties and made the pressure on the remaining *assidui* still more intense. This crisis of manpower led Gracchus to bring in his agrarian law, with the intention of replenishing the peasantry and so enhancing the numbers of men qualified and available for military service. However, the measure did not achieve its intended effect, and the recruitment crisis was eventually solved by Marius' abolition of the property qualification for military service.

This familiar picture has over the past thirty years or so been subjected to increasing attack, and I contributed to this revisionist critique in an article published in 1983.[11] In what follows I shall be revisiting these themes in the light of more recent work.

One of the aspects of the traditional picture which has appeared particularly vulnerable has been the claim that the second century B.C. was a period of dramatic agrarian change, marking a major shift towards the "slave mode of production". The development of field survey has played an important part in this challenge. The South Etruria Survey, the first major field survey conducted in Italy, was taken by its organizers to reveal a high density of rural settlement in both the Republican and early imperial periods with small farms forming a high proportion of all farm sites.[12] Small farmsteads are also prominent in subsequent surveys conducted in a number of other regions, and, where large villas do come to predominate, as in the coastal territory of Cosa or parts of Campania, this development does not appear to get under way until the later second century.[13] As work has progressed, uncertainties have

[11] J.W. Rich, 'The supposed Roman manpower shortage of the later second century B.C.', *Historia* 22 (1983), 287–331.

[12] The survey reports were published in the *Papers of the British School of Rome* from 1958 to 1968, and T.W. Potter, *The Changing Landscape of South Etruria* (London 1979), presented a synthesis (for rural settlement in the Republican and early imperial periods see 93–101, 120–137). M.W. Frederiksen, 'The contribution of archaeology to the agrarian problem in the Gracchan period', *Dialoghi di Archeologia* 4–5 (1970–1971), 330–357, drew attention to the contradiction between the survey findings and the traditional doctrine of second-century agrarian crisis.

[13] The findings of separate American and Italian field surveys of the environs of Cosa are reported and discussed at S. Dyson, 'Settlement patterns in the ager Cosanus: the Wesleyan University survey, 1974–1976', *Journal of Field Archaeology* 5 (1978),

multiplied. It has, for example, been questioned how far the smallest farmsteads may show up in the data at all.[14] Reassessment of the South Etruria Survey results shows that most of the black glaze ware found dated to the late fourth or third century and only a small quantity to the last two centuries B.C.; this finding is taken by some as attesting depopulation in the region in that period, but its interpretation remains uncertain.[15] Two points at least emerge clearly from the extensive field survey results now available: the data clearly indicate wide variation between and within the different regions of Italy, and give little support for the hypothesis of a general shift to slave production in the immediately pre-Gracchan period.[16]

Other considerations too suggest that the shift to slave-run land use was never as complete as sometimes supposed. Rathbone has stressed that slave plantations will have depended on nearby peasant farmers for additional labour at peak periods,[17] and the importance of not exaggerating the extent of slave-run plantations is brought out by

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251–268; M. Celuzza and E. Regoli, 'La Valle d'Oro nel territorio di Cosa. Ager Cosanus e Ager Veientanus a confronto', *Dialoghi di Archeologia* n.s. 1 (1982), 31–62; I. Attolini et al., in G. Barker and J. Lloyd (eds.), *Roman Landscapes: Archaeological Survey in the Mediterranean Region* (London 1991), 142–152; A. Carandini and F. Cambi (eds.), *Paesaggi d'Etruria* (Rome 2002). For Campania see in particular M.W. Frederiksen, 'I cambiamenti delle strutture agrarie nella tarda repubblica: la Campania', in A. Giardina and A. Schiavone (eds.), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica* (Rome 1981), 1.265–287; P. Arthur, *Romans in Northern Campania* (London 1991), especially 55 ff. For field surveys in other regions of Italy see especially G. Barker, *A Mediterranean Valley: Landscape Archaeology and* Annales *History in the Biferno Valley* (London and New York 1995); E. Lo Cascio and A. Storchi Marino, *Modalità insediative e strutture agrarie nell'Italia meridionale in età Romana* (Bari, 2001).

[14] D.W. Rathbone, 'The Italian countryside and the Gracchan "crisis"', *JACT Review* 13 (1993), 18–20.

[15] P. Liverani, 'L'ager Veientanus in età repubblicana', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 52 (1984), 36–48; N. Morley, *Metropolis and Hinterland: The City of Rome and the Italian Economy 200 B.C.–A.D. 200* (Cambridge 1996), 95–103; H. Patterson, H. di Giuseppe and R. Witcher, 'Three South Etrurian "crises": first results of the Tiber Valley Project', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 72 (2004), 1–36, at 13–17; H. di Giuseppe, 'Un confronto tra l'Etruria settentrionale e meridionale dal punto di vista della ceramica a vernice nera', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 73 (2005), 31–84.

[16] See also S.L. Dyson, *Community and Society in Roman Italy* (Baltimore and London 1992), 26 ff.; E. Curti, E. Dench and J.R. Patterson, 'The archaeology of central and southern Roman Italy: recent trends and approaches', *Journal of Roman Studies* 86 (1996), 170–189; N. Rosenstein, *Rome at War: Farms, Families and Death in the Middle Republic* (Chapel Hill and London 2004), 6–10; L. de Ligt, 'The economy: agrarian change during the second century B.C.', in N. Rosenstein and R. Morstein-Marx, *A Companion to the Roman Republic* (Oxford 2006), 590–605.

[17] D.W. Rathbone, 'The development of agriculture in the ager Cosanus', *Journal of Roman Studies* 71 (1981), 10–23.

Jongman's demonstration that in Augustus' day about two per cent of the cultivable land of Italy could have sufficed to produce all the wine and olive oil consumed by the population of the Italian cities.[18] Scheidel now estimates the number of agricultural slaves in Italy under Augustus as only half the 1.2 million postulated by Brunt and Hopkins.[19]

It has also become increasingly recognized that agricultural slavery will have become established in Roman Italy well before the Second Punic War. The abolition of *nexum* in the late fourth century could hardly have taken place without the development of chattel slavery as an alternative source of agricultural labour; a high proportion of the large numbers enslaved during the conquest of Italy must surely have ended up working their conquerors' lands; and the Romans' ability to conscript substantial numbers during the Second Punic War can only be explained on the assumption that agricultural slavery was already widespread.[20]

No doubt the shift towards slave-run land use will have continued and perhaps intensified during the second century B.C. Cato's writing of the first Roman agricultural treatise may be one symptom of this process. In southern Italy the devastation wreaked by both sides during the Hannibalic War may perhaps have facilitated the subsequent development of long-distance transhumant pasturage and the extensive confiscations of rebel land which followed the war will certainly have done so.[21] However, the old view of the early and middle second century as a dramatic turning point in Italian agrarian development has become increasingly hard to maintain.

Something of the same kind is also true for military service. As Rosenstein has shown in an important recent book, extended periods

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[18] W. Jongman, 'Slavery and the growth of Rome: the transformation of Italy in the second and first centuries B.C.E.', in C. Edwards and G. Woolf (eds.), *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge 2003), 100–121, at 113–115.

[19] W. Scheidel, 'Human mobility in Roman Italy, II: the slave population', *Journal of Roman Studies* 95 (2005), 64–79.

[20] M.I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (London 1980), 83–86; T.J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome* (London 1995), 333, 393–394; K.-W. Welwei, *Sub Corona Vendere: Quellenkritische Studien zu Kriegsgefangenschaft und Sklaverei in Rom bis zum Ende des Hannibalkrieges* (Stuttgart, 2000); Rosenstein 2004, op. cit. (n. 16), 7–8.

[21] Toynbee 1965, op. cit. (n. 10), 10 ff., 117 ff., 239 ff., with the criticisms of Brunt 1971, op. cit. (n. 10), 269 ff., 353 ff., and the riposte of T.J. Cornell, 'Hannibal's Legacy: the effects of the Hannibalic War in Italy', in T.J. Cornell, B. Rankov and P. Sabin (eds.), *The Second Punic War: A Reappraisal* (London 1996), 97–117; E. Gabba and M. Pasquinucci, *Strutture agrarie e allevamento transumante nell'Italia romana* (Pisa 1979); Lo Cascio and Storchi Marino 2001, op. cit. (n. 13).

of service were not a novelty introduced from the Second Punic War, but can be traced back to the late fourth century.[22] It follows that the deployment of a substantial proportion of their manpower on extended military service cannot have spelt inevitable disaster for the Italian peasantry, since otherwise the Roman Republic could not have fought so many wars over so long a period with armies manned from that source. It is a notable achievement of Rosenstein's study to demonstrate in detail how the compatibility of peasant farming with extended military service may have worked, by means of sophisticated modelling of family patterns and production needs. As he shows, the late age of male marriage ensured that for some family patterns it was a positive advantage to have a son away at war and for others strategies were available to minimize harm, while, except at times of greatest pressure, the levying authorities may have avoided taking men whose loss would jeopardize farm survival.[23]

What, then, of the manpower problems which are held to have given rise to Gracchus' initiative? My 1983 article was mainly concerned with the *assidui* and sought to refute the view that in the later second century there was a real and serious shortage of men qualified for the levy. To my mind, the arguments I deployed then still hold good, and have been reinforced by subsequent research. If there was a drop in the number of *assidui*, it will have been mitigated by the reduced military burden, since the forces deployed were mostly lower in the later than in the earlier second century.[24] The attested difficulties over the levy suggest not a general shortage of willing recruits but merely reluctance to serve in those wars which seemed particularly dangerous and unrewarding.[25] The property rating required for military service was probably so low that most rural citizens qualified, and modern theories which explain the sources' discrepant figures as reflecting a progressive reduction of the rating in response to a shortage of qualified men are merely speculative and, in their most widely followed form, conflict

[22] Rosenstein 2004, op. cit. (n. 16), 26–58.
[23] Rosenstein 2004, op. cit. (n. 16), 63–106.
[24] Rich 1983, op. cit. (n. 11), 288–295.
[25] Rich 1983, op. cit. (n. 11), 316–318. Cf. Y. Shochat, *Recruitment and the Programme of Tiberius Gracchus* (Brussels 1980), 55 ff.; J.K. Evans, 'Resistance at home: the evasion of military service in Italy during the second century B.C.', in T. Yuge and M. Doi (eds.), *Forms of Control and Subordination in Antiquity* (Leiden 1988), 121–140.

with what is known of the development of the Roman coinage.[26] As for Marius' willingness to enrol volunteers for the Jugurthine War without regard to the property qualification, it still seems to me that it is best explained as a short-term attempt to capitalize on his popularity which was not followed by his successors, and that subsequent levies probably continued to be restricted to *assidui* until the radical change in levying methods which resulted from the civil wars of the eighties.[27]

The manpower anxiety which Appian and Plutarch attribute to Gracchus was about the numbers not of the *assidui*, but of the whole freeborn population. It has sometimes been maintained that the concern ascribed to him was about quality, not numbers, but, although Appian's use of terms like *euandria* and *dysandria* leaves open that possibility, the rest of his exposition shows that Gracchus' fear was that freeborn numbers were falling through failure to rear children.[28] There is no reason to doubt that this is indeed what he claimed and that he sincerely believed it, but was he right?

Brunt and Hopkins believe that he was, maintaining that the freeborn population of Italy declined from about 4.5 million in 225 B.C. (a figure derived from the manpower returns reported by Polybius) to about 4 million at the time of Augustus' census of 28 B.C.[29] This conclusion depends on the view that, while the Republican census figures recorded adult males, those of Augustus included women and children. This has been disputed by Lo Cascio, and, if he is right that Augustus, like

[26] Rich 1983, op. cit. (n. 11), 305–316. Two successive reductions in response to manpower shortage, in the Hannibalic War and in the second century, were postulated by E. Gabba, *Republican Rome, The Army and the Allies* (trans. P.J. Cuff, Oxford 1976), 1–19 (first published 1949), and Brunt 1971, op. cit. (n. 10), 402–405. Ingenious new hypotheses, taking due account of the Hannibalic War devaluations and the retariffing of the denarius *c.* 140, have been proposed by E. Lo Cascio, 'Ancora sui censi minimi delle cinque classi "serviane"', *Athenaeum* 76 (1988), 273–302, and D.W. Rathbone, 'The census qualifications of the *assidui* and the *prima classis*', in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg et al. (eds.), *De Agricultura: In Memoriam Pieter Willem de Neeve* (Amsterdam, 1993), 121–153. Both suppose that the real value of the qualification was reduced during the Hannibalic War, and Rathbone postulates a further reduction *c.* 140. However, these reconstructions are highly conjectural, and in any case both scholars interpret the supposed census qualification changes as primarily the consequence of monetary developments rather than responses to manpower shortage [see especially Rathbone 1993, op. cit. (n. 14)].

[27] Rich 1983, op. cit. (n. 11), 323–330.

[28] So rightly Rosenstein 2004, op. cit. (n. 16), 277, criticizing E. Lo Cascio, 'Popolazione e risorse agricole nell'Italia del II secolo a.C.', in D. Vera (ed.), *Demografia, sistemi agrari, regimi alimentari nel mondo antico* (Bari 1999), 217–240, at 231.

[29] Brunt 1971, op. cit. (n. 10), 44–130; Hopkins 1978, op. cit. (n. 10), 67–69.

the Republican censors, recorded only adult males, it will follow that the free population of Italy was both much higher than on Brunt's reconstruction and steadily rising.[30] This is not the place to enter this controversy. However, as de Ligt has recently shown, even if Brunt's interpretation of the census figures is accepted, it does not follow that the free Italian population was in decline between 225 and 28 B.C., since Polybius' figures can be interpreted to yield a substantially lower starting population.[31]

However this may be, the evidence of the census figures is best interpreted as indicating that the Roman citizen population was rising during the second century B.C. To be sure, for a time the returns will have given the opposite impression, dropping from 337,022 in 163 to 317,933 in 135. This decline may have contributed to Gracchus' belief that the freeborn population was falling. However, in 124 and 114, returns of respectively 394,736 and 394,336 are recorded. The similarity of the two figures is suspicious, but it is excessively sceptical to dismiss them both as corrupt. At least one of the figures should be accepted as genuine, and it follows that the decline from 163 to 135 must reflect not a real decline in numbers, but an increase in non-registration. This may have been partly prompted by the wish to avoid conscription for the unpopular Spanish wars, and the availability of Gracchan land allotments may have helped to reverse the trend (though in that case it is surprising that the effect was not felt until 124). Brunt recognized that the real trend in the census figures at this point was upwards, but attributed this to greatly increased manumission.[32] This is not plausible. As de Ligt has argued, the increase in the citizen numbers must also imply an increase in the number of freeborn citizens.[33]

Thus the revisionist critique has in my view succeeded in showing that there was in reality no crisis of land or manpower in 133 B.C.

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[30] E. Lo Cascio, 'The size of the Roman population: Beloch and the meaning of the Augustan census figures', *Journal of Roman Studies* 84 (1994), 23–40; id. 1999, op. cit. (n. 28); id., 'Recruitment and the size of the Roman population from the third to the first century B.C.', in W. Scheidel (ed.), *Debating Roman Demography* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne 2001), 111–138. N. Morley, 'The transformation of Italy, 225–28 B.C.', *Journal of Roman Studies* 91 (2001), 50–62, explores the implications of Lo Cascio's views. For ripostes to Lo Cascio, see W. Scheidel, 'Human mobility in Roman Italy, I: the free population', *Journal of Roman Studies* 94 (2004), 1–26, at 2–9; L. de Ligt, this volume.

[31] L. de Ligt, 'Poverty and demography: the case of the Gracchan land reforms', *Mnemosyne* 57 (2004), 725–757, at 728–738.

[32] Brunt 1971, op. cit. (n. 10), 74–83.

[33] De Ligt 2004, op. cit. (n. 31), 738–744.

An obvious problem then remains: if there was no crisis, how are we to account for Gracchus' decision to put forward his bitterly contentious bill?

At one level, the question is not difficult to answer: although doubtless sincere, Gracchus was mistaken in his beliefs about agrarian change and the population trend. Misperceptions on such matters can be readily documented from other societies, for example eighteenth century England and France.[34] Chance impressions may have fostered Gracchus' view of the extent of the slave intrusion, as on his celebrated journey through Etruria, when he may have seen the first villas in the coastal territory of Cosa.[35] Pronatalist manpower anxieties were shared by his contemporaries like Metellus Macedonicus, censor in 131, and by Romans in other periods, notably the emperor Augustus.[36] The slave war in Sicily and the minor outbreaks on the mainland would have given these concerns added urgency. In any case, Romans were only too prone to conceive exaggerated fears for the security of the Republic, as when, a mere thirteen years before Gracchus' tribunate, they destroyed Carthage in the mistaken belief that it posed a threat which required its extirpation.

The motives of Gracchus and his supporters were doubtless complex. Both Gracchus himself and Ap. Claudius Pulcher had quarreled with the pre-eminent Roman of the day, Gracchus' brother-in-law Scipio Aemilianus, and their enthusiasm for the agrarian law may well have been fired not only by their conviction that the safety of the Republic required it, but also by the reflection that its grateful beneficiaries would include the veterans whom Scipio would shortly be bringing back after his expected victory over Numantia.[37]

It is, however, clear that in offering his land allotments Gracchus was responding to a widely felt need. Before Gracchus announced his law, numerous posters are said to have appeared calling on him to recover the public land for the poor,[38] and, once the law had been

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[34] Rosenstein 2004, op. cit. (n. 16), 157; De Ligt 2004, op. cit. (n. 31), 752–753.

[35] Plutarch, *Tiberius Gracchus* 8.9.

[36] Metellus' censorial speech urging marriage: Livy, *Periochae* 59; Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 89.2; Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 1.6.

[37] The political explanation of the law has, however, been taken too far by some adherents of the factional theory of Roman politics, e.g. D.C. Earl, *Tiberius Gracchus: A Study in Politics* (Brussels 1963); J. Briscoe, 'Supporters and opponents of Tiberius Gracchus', *Journal of Roman Studies* 64 (1974), 125–135.

[38] Plutarch, *Tiberius Gracchus* 8.10.

promulgated, he was able to mobilize mass support for it, particularly from country-dwellers. Gracchus then was responding to genuine rural distress. How are we to account for it?

One element will certainly have been peasants for whom military service had been damaging and whose land had been taken over by the rich: although such developments were not as widespread as supposed, they will have occurred.

Another factor which may well have contributed to rural distress has been identified by both Rosenstein and De Ligt, namely population increase: if the population was rising at the rate implied by the census figures, this is likely to have resulted in increased competition for land.[39] Paradoxically, the distress which Gracchus associated with depopulation may have been partly the result of its opposite. Rosenstein indeed believes that the true rate of increase will have been substantially higher than the census figures suggest, since he postulates a very high rate of military mortality.[40] However, he reaches this conclusion through perhaps excessive confidence in the reliability of Livy's figures for Roman casualties, and it seems unlikely that Roman losses in the largely successful wars of the earlier second century were as high as Rosenstein supposes.

There is another factor of which both Rosenstein and De Ligt are of course aware, but on which I would myself place the greatest stress, namely the cessation of land settlement in the generation before Gracchus. Ever since the capture of Veii, it had been the practice of the Roman state to distribute much of the land confiscated from defeated Italian enemies in allotments to citizens and allies, either by founding colonies or by viritane assignations. The main allocations had come in two phases, 334–263 B.C. and 200–173 B.C.: in the first phase up to 100,000 adult males, Romans and allies, may have benefited, in the second perhaps about 50,000.[41] Those receiving colonial allotments and many of those receiving viritane allotments will have moved to their new lands. These massive land transfers and migrations could not have

[39] Rosenstein 2004, op. cit. (n. 16), 141–169; De Ligt 2004, op. cit. (n. 31).

[40] Rosenstein 2004, op. cit. (n. 16), 107–140.

[41] See now Scheidel 2004, op. cit. (n. 30), 10–11; 334–263 B.C.: Cornell 1995, op. cit. (n. 20), 380–381; 200–173 B.C.: T. Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome* 1 (Baltimore 1933), 114–24; Toynbee 1965, op. cit. (n. 10), 654–656. Scheidel's figure of 'a maximum of 75,000 relocations' in the early second century includes up to 40,000 veterans eligible for the viritane allotments offered in 200–199, but many may not have taken them up.

taken place if land shortage and land hunger had not been a constant feature of the Italian peasant economy, the product of systemic factors such as partible inheritance. The Roman state took on itself to satisfy this hunger from the resources acquired by conquest. When such expectations had been raised, it was not surprising that discontent should begin to be felt when they ceased to be met. This can already be seen in the later third century: although some colonies were founded in the period 262–201, they were much fewer than in the earlier period, and unmet land hunger thus may account for the tribune C. Flaminius' success in carrying a law providing for the distribution of the *ager Gallicus* in 232 in the teeth of senatorial opposition. After 173, we hear of virtually no government-sponsored land settlement.[42] Some settlements may have gone unrecorded, particularly after we lose Livy's record from 167. However, the probability is that settlement largely ceased. This is not surprising: with the conquest of Italy complete, no more Italian land was being acquired, and there was no strategic requirement for the foundation of colonies. But the endemic land hunger will have continued and will have been intensified by other factors like agrarian change and population increase.

Tiberius Gracchus convinced himself that the Roman state should continue to satisfy this demand for land, and indeed that its safety required it to do so in order to ensure the prosperity of the peasant stock from which its armies were drawn. However, in the sequel a succession of tribunes and later of ambitious commanders set out to follow his example in meeting the land demand which the government continued to refuse to satisfy. Thus Gracchus' response to an imagined crisis of land and manpower initiated the political crisis which was to lead to the Republic's fall.

Nottingham, September 2006

[42] Velleius 1.15.3 dates the colony at Auximum to 157, but the true date may be 128: see E.T. Salmon, 'The *coloniae maritimae*', *Athenaeum* 41 (1963), 3–38, at 10–13.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE NATURE OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC 'CRISIS' OF THE SECOND CENTURY B.C.

Luuk de Ligt

One of the most interesting debates conducted by ancient historians in recent years concerns the development of the Italian population during the last two centuries of the Republic. On the one hand, there are the so-called low-counters, who reckon with a free Italian population of roughly 4 million in the time of Augustus. On the other hand, we have the high-counters, who think that there were more than 13 million people of citizen status in 28 B.C. and who estimate the free and unfree population of early-imperial Italy at approximately 15 million.[1]

Since these two rival scenarios imply very different interpretations of the demographic and agrarian 'crisis' lying behind the Gracchan land reforms, the importance of this debate for those who are interested in the history of second-century B.C. Italy does not need to be underlined. Most of the low-counters have tended to accept the picture of inexorable demographic decline that is found in Appian and in Plutarch.

[1] The most important contributions are: E. Lo Cascio, 'The Size of the Roman Population: Beloch and the Meaning of the Augustan Census Figures', *Journal of Roman Studies* 84 (1994), 23–40; W. Scheidel, *Measuring Sex, Age and Death in the Roman Empire. Explorations in Ancient Demography* (Ann Arbor 1996), 167–168; E. Lo Cascio, 'The Population of Roman Italy in Town and Country', in J.L. Bintliff and K. Sbonias (eds.), *Reconstructing Past Population Trends in Mediterranean Europe (3000 B.C.–A.D. 1800)* (Oxford 1999), 161–171; *idem*, 'Recruitment and the Size of the Roman Population from the Third to the First Century B.C.E.', in W. Scheidel (ed.), *Debating Roman Demography* (Leiden 2001), 111–137; N. Morley, 'The Transformation of Italy, 225–28 B.C.', *Journal of Roman Studies* 91 (2001), 50–62; E. Lo Cascio and P. Malanima, 'Cycles and Stability. Italian Population before the Demographic Transition (225 B.C.–A.D. 1900)', in *Rivista di Storia Economica* 21 (2005) 5–40; and G. Kron, 'The Augustan Census Figures and the Population of Italy', *Athenaeum* 93 (2005) 441–495. Cf. also L. de Ligt, 'Poverty and Demography: the Case of the Gracchan Land Reforms', *Mnemosyne* 57 (2004), 725–757. As Scheidel 1996, op. cit., 167, points out, the Augustan censuses are unlikely to have comprised more than 90 per cent of those who should have been registered. This means that Lo Cascio's reading of the census figure for 28 B.C. actually implies a citizen population of ca. 15 million (of whom 1.25 might be assigned to the provinces; see Lo Cascio 1999, op. cit., 164) and an Italian population (including slaves) of roughly 17 million. This is larger than the Italian population at any time before A.D. 1750 (Lo Cascio and Malanima 2005, op. cit., 14–15).

Against this the high-counters have argued that the last two centuries of the Republic witnessed very fast population growth, the average annual growth rate being in the order of 0.5 or 0.4 per cent.[2] If this is correct, we must give up the notion that the Gracchan land reforms were intended to remedy a shortage of military recruits caused by a steady decline of the free country-dwelling population.

The aim of this paper is to evaluate some of the strengths and weaknesses of the high count and the low count models. Since I will be using some of the preliminary results of a larger research project on the history of republican Italy during the second century B.C. which will not be completed before 2009, I do not aim to come up with any definitive answers. Rather, my primary aim is to stimulate discussion by raising some questions to which no satisfactory answers seem to have been given so far.

I would like to begin with some of the scanty quantitative data that have been preserved in the literary tradition. The most important of these are the census figures for the period 264–69 B.C. As is generally known, the last figure before the start of the Hannibalic War, referring to 234 B.C., is roughly 270,000. Thirty years later, in 204 B.C., the number of male citizens registered by the censors had dropped to 214,000, partly as a result of heavy casualties but also because the *cives sine suffragio* of Campania were no longer included.[3] During the 35 years that follow we observe a rapid rise to approximately 335,000 in 164 B.C., and then a slow decline until 130 B.C. Finally, we see a sudden jump to almost 400,000 in 124 and 114 B.C.

According to the low-counters, these figures give at least a rough idea of the development of the citizen body during the third and second centuries B.C. This is not to say that those who subscribe to the low-count model agree on every point of detail. In fact, there is substantial disagreement concerning demographic developments between 164 and 124 B.C. According to many low-counters, the downward trend in the census figures during these 40 years is real in the sense that it reflects

[2] For the higher percentage see Lo Cascio 1994, op. cit. (n. 1), 170, and Scheidel 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 167. The lower growth rate is implied by his revised estimate of the size of the free Italian population in 225 B.C., for which see Lo Cascio and Malanima 2005, op. cit. (n. 1), 9.

[3] According to Lo Cascio 1999, op. cit. (n. 1), 163–164, the census figures of the third and second centuries B.C. did not comprise the *cives sine suffragio*. Against this see P. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.–A.D. 14* (Oxford 1971, re-issued with a new postscript 1987), 17–21.

Table 1: Roman census figures (265 B.C.–A.D. 14)

Year	Census figure	Source
265/4 B.C.	292.234	Eutropius 2.18
252/1 B.C.	297.797	Livy *Periochae* 18
247/6 B.C.	241.712	Livy *Periochae* 19
241/0 B.C.	260.000	Hieronymus Ol.134.1
234/3 B.C.	270.713	Livy *Periochae* 20
209/8 B.C.	137.108	Livy 27.36
204/3 B.C.	214.000	Livy 29.37
194/3 B.C.	143.704	Livy 35.9
189/8 B.C.	258.318	Livy 38.36
179/8 B.C.	258.794	Livy *Periochae* 41
174/3 B.C.	269.015	Livy 42.10
169/8 B.C.	312.805	Livy *Periochae* 45
164/3 B.C.	337.022	Livy *Periochae* 46
159/8 B.C.	328.316	Livy *Periochae* 47
154/3 B.C.	324.000	Livy *Periochae* 48
147/6 B.C.	322.000	Eusebius Armen. Ol.158.3
142/1 B.C.	327.442	Livy *Periochae* 54
136/5 B.C.	317.933	Livy *Periochae* 56
131/0 B.C.	318.823	Livy *Periochae* 59
125/4 B.C.	394.736	Livy *Periochae* 60
115/4 B.C.	394.336	Livy *Periochae* 63
86/5 B.C.	463.000	Hieronymus Ol.173.4
70/69 B.C.	910.000	Phlegon fragment 12.6
28 B.C.	4.063.000	*Res Gestae* 8.2
8 B.C.	4.233.000	*Res Gestae* 8.3
A.D.14	4.937.000	*Res Gestae* 8.4

genuine population decline. If this is correct, we must discard the figures for 124 and 114, as indeed Beloch and Toynbee were prepared to do.[4] In my view, it is better to assume that the figures for these years are approximately correct. This means that we must find an explanation for the decline after 164 B.C. In an earlier publication I have argued that the slow decline during these years reflects an increase in rural poverty that was caused by continuing population growth. The basic idea behind this interpretation is that proletarians were registered less efficiently than *assidui*. In other words, during the years 164–130 B.C. the census figures became increasingly unreliable because the number

[4] K.J. Beloch, *Die Bevölkerung der griechisch-römischen Welt* (Leipzig 1886), 351; A. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy*, vol. II (Oxford 1965), 471.

of proletarians kept increasing. The corollary of this interpretation is that registration improved after 130 B.C., perhaps partly as a result of the Gracchan land reforms and perhaps also as a result of other factors that I cannot go into in this paper.[5] An interesting implication of this theory is that by the late 130s B.C. about one quarter of the adult male citizen population was not registered by the censors.

A far more radical reading of the census figures has been proposed by the high-counters, who cannot accept them as being even approximately correct. In their view, these figures do not reflect genuine demographic development at all. They have developed two arguments to buttress this skeptical view. The first of these arguments boils down to the claim that all the census figures for the second century B.C. are to be interpreted as referring mainly to *assidui*. The idea behind this is that proletarian citizens were effectively and perhaps even formally released from the obligation to register themselves with the censors. Up to a point, this is similar to my own view that an increase in the number of proletarian citizens increased the number of citizens not registered by the censors. There is, however, a crucial difference. In order to cast doubt on the reliability of the census figures, the high-counters argue that proletarians made up the overwhelming majority of the citizen body. If this could be proved to be correct and if it could also be proved that most proletarians were not counted, we would indeed have to conclude that the census figures are no guide to demographic developments.

Although this argument is logically coherent, it runs up against at least one serious difficulty. As Lo Cascio has explained in several publications, the high-count scenario implies that there must have been some 500,000 adult male citizens on the eve of the Hannibalic War.[6] He also thinks that the total free population of Italy as a whole was roughly 6 million in 225 B.C.,[7] and that there were more than 13 mil-

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[5] For a more extensive discussion of this topic see De Ligt 2004, op. cit. (n. 1), 742–743, and especially *idem*, 'Roman Manpower and Recruitment during the Middle Republic', in P. Erdkamp (ed.), *A companion to the Roman Army* (Oxford 2007), 125–127.

[6] For example Lo Cascio 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), 132–133.

[7] In Lo Cascio 1999, op. cit. (n. 1), 168, the free population of the Italian Confederation less the territory of the Bruttii and that of the Italiote Greeks in 225 B.C. is estimated at ca. 3.5 million, implying a free population of ca. 4.6 million for peninsular Italy. In Lo Cascio and Malanima 2005, op. cit. (n. 1), 9, we find a figure of between 6 and 8 million for peninsular Italy plus Cisalpina. Since the estimate of 8 million is based on the unrealistic assumption that the population density of Cisalpine Gaul was equal to that of Central Italy, my assessment of the high-count scenario is based on

lion Roman citizens in 28 B.C. of whom he assigns 12 million to Italy. The annual growth rate implied by his two estimates of the size of the free population of Italy as a whole is roughly 0.4 per cent. By applying this growth rate to the hypothetical 500,000 adult male citizens of 225 B.C. we obtain a rough estimate of 730,000 adult men of citizen status in 125 B.C.[8] It would then follow that the census figure for 130 B.C., when 318,000 *capita civium* were counted, was deficient by some 56.5 per cent. For 124 B.C., when 395,000 *cives* were registered, the corresponding figure would be 47 per cent. In my view, it is a serious weakness of the high-count scenario that it does not explain how the hundreds of thousands of rural proletarians implied by these figures managed to make a living in the rural and urban economy of republican Italy. As far as I can see, the only way to account for the existence of a huge rural proletariat of citizen status is to assume that hundreds of thousands of impoverished *cives* made a living as wage labourers or as tenants.[9] Since in the agrarian economy of republican Italy wage labour was almost exclusively seasonal, the former scenario seems unrealistic.[10] The idea that tenancy was an important phenomenon already in the second century B.C. is less problematic.[11] Nonetheless it is difficult to believe that some 50 per cent of the citizen population derived most of its income from leaseholdings. This problem is all the more acute because in the time of the Gracchi even many *assidui* appear to have

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the figure of 6 million, which still is 50 per cent higher than the estimate of 4 million favoured by Brunt 1987, op. cit. (n. 3), 52–60, and by K. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge 1978), 68.

[8] An annual growth rate of 0.4 per cent will generate 46 per cent growth in 95 years and 49 per cent growth after a century. Since the Roman citizen body is likely to have grown faster than other sections of the Italian population, the rate of 0.4 per cent is a minimum.

[9] A third possibility is that in the time of the Gracchi most of the so-called *ager occupatorius* was held by *proletarii*, but this scenario runs counter to the literary tradition according to which the wealthy elite controlled a disproportionate share of the public land. Even if public land played a more important part in the agrarian economy than is claimed by D. Rathbone, 'The Control and Exploitation of ager publicus in Italy under the Roman Republic', in J.-J. Aubert (ed.), *Tâches publiques et entreprise privée dans le monde romain* (Genève 2003), 135–178, it cannot be maintained that it was the most important economic asset for the vast majority of the country-dwelling population.

[10] Cf. P. Erdkamp, *The Grain Market in the Roman Empire. A Social, Political and Economic Study* (Cambridge 2005), 82–83.

[11] Cf. L. de Ligt, 'Roman Manpower Resources and the Proletarianization of the Roman Army in the Second Century B.C.' in L. de Blois and E. Lo Cascio, *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 B.C.–A.D. 476): Economic, Social, Political, Religious and Cultural Aspects*. Impact of Empire 6 (Leiden and Boston 2007) forthcoming.

owned tiny holdings insufficient to cover the subsistence needs of their families.[12] This means that even without the hundreds of thousands invisible proletarians postulated by the high-counters a large number of poor citizens have to be fitted into our reconstruction of the agrarian economy of the late second century B.C. Since the high-counters do not deal with any of these issues, it seems fair to conclude that they have not thought through the economic implications of their first argument.

Those who think that Italy's free population was three times higher than is usually thought also use another argument. In their view, those Roman citizens who wanted to register with the censors could do so only in Rome. In other words, they hold that the Roman censors registered only those citizens who made themselves physically present in the capital. As has often been pointed out, the system of registration implied by this theory would have been highly impractical, for the obvious reason that even many *assidui* must have been reluctant to travel to Rome.[13] For this reason alone, it seems better to assume that registration was carried out locally, as certainly was the case in the 40s B.C. What then is the evidence in favour of the view that before the final decades of the Republic registration was possible only in Rome? As is well-known, Cicero reports that in 70 B.C. a large crowd came to Rome for the census, for the games and for the elections. According to the high-counters this proves that Roman citizens who wanted to register themselves with the censors had to travel to Rome.[14] However, as Michael Crawford and Claude Nicolet pointed out ten years ago, the crowd referred to by Cicero may well have consisted of the representatives of the Italian *municipia* who had to travel to Rome in order to present the results of their local census operations.[15] It is true that these representatives are

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[12] According to D. Rathbone, 'The Census qualifications of the *Assidui* and the *Prima Classis*', in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg et al. (eds.), *De Agricultura. In Memoriam Pieter Willem de Neeve* (Amsterdam 1993), 145, in the time of the Gracchi the ownership of a garden plot and a hut was enough to meet the property qualification for military service.

[13] For example Brunt 1987, op. cit. (n. 3), 40–43; M. Humbert, *Civitas et municipium sine suffragio. L'organisation de la conquête jusqu'à la guerre sociale* (Rome 1978), 323–324; C. Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome* (Berkeley-Los Angeles 1988), 66.

[14] Cicero, *Oratio in Verrem* 1.18.54, used to buttress the high-count model by E. Lo Cascio, 'Il *census* a Roma e la sua evoluzione dall' età "serviana" alla prima età imperiale', *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome. Antiquité* 113 (2001), 596–597, and by Kron 2005, op. cit. (n. 1), 452–453.

[15] M. Crawford and C. Nicolet, in M. Crawford, *Roman Statutes*, vol. I (London 1996), 389.

not likely to have formed a huge crowd. However, as Cicero himself explains, the visitors in question comprised many people who came to Rome for the games and for the elections. In other words, the only piece of evidence for universal registration in Rome cannot bear the heavy burden placed upon it by the high-counters.

In an attempt to shift the burden of proof on to the shoulders of their critics, some high-counters have claimed that there is no evidence for a decentralized census procedure before the *Tabula Heracleensis*, which recent scholarship tends to assign to the time of Caesar.[16] An obvious weakness of this argument is that the *Tabula* is widely regarded as containing many tralatician provisions. For this reason we must at least reckon with the possibility that the decentralized procedure described in it was not a novelty introduced by Caesar.[17] More importantly, however, those who claim that there is no evidence for a decentralized census procedure before the mid-40s B.C. seem to have taken insufficient account of two pieces of literary evidence. One of these is Livy's account of the difficulties encountered by those responsible for the levy of 169 B.C.[18] One of these was that many men were absent from the army in Macedonia without official leave. In order to deal with this problem the censors issued an edict concerning soldiers enlisted for Macedonia in or after 172 B.C. Any of these who were in Italy should return to the province within thirty days, after first appearing for assessment before the censors. Interestingly, Livy rounds off this episode with a short comment on the effectiveness of this measure:

> As a result of this edict, and of letters sent by the censors for circulation in all market places and other places of assembly (*fora et conciliabula*), so large a throng of men of military age assembled in Rome that the unwanted overcrowding caused great inconvenience to the city.

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[16] For a full discussion of this problem see Crawford 1996, op. cit. (n. 15), 360–362.

[17] Cf. Crawford 1996, op. cit. (n. 15), 358: "The absence of unity in the text is at once apparent. This may perhaps best be explained by the supposition that the text is a digest of material drawn from different sources". Many scholars have dated the section concerning the local census to the years following the conclusion of the Social War. See for example F. Schönbauer, 'Die Tafel von Heraklea in neuer Beleuchtung', *Anzeiger / Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse* 8 (1952) 130–131; F. de Martino, 'Nota sulla "Lex Julia Municipalis"', in *Studi in onore di Ugo Enrico Paoli* (Firenze 1955), 255–238 at 233 and 237; Brunt 1987, op. cit. (n. 3) 521; C. Nicolet, 'Les listes des centuries: la prétendue centurie *nequis scivit*', *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome. Antiquité* 113 (2001), 725.

[18] Livy 43.14.2–10.

At first sight, this passage may seem to confirm that those under the obligation to register themselves with the censors could do so only in Rome. In actual fact, however, it implies precisely the opposite, for it appears quite clearly that the censors' responsibility was confined to the *fora et conciliabula* of the *ager Romanus*.[19] As Crawford has noted, "the implication is that other communities had their own appropriate magistrates who were expected to take their own measures".[20] In an article which appeared in 1990 Lo Cascio tries to explain away this piece of evidence by interpreting the measures of 169 B.C. as referring solely to the *dilectus*.[21] Against this restrictive interpretation it may be pointed out that the edict referred to by Livy explicitly ordered any soldiers *sui iuris* to return to Macedonia after registering themselves with the censors (*censi prius apud sese*), while those who were *alieni iuris* were to be reported by their father or grandfathers.[22] We must conclude from this that the edict concerned both the *dilectus* and the *census*.

Another important clue is provided by Cicero's speech in defence of Cluentius, in which he accuses Oppianicus of "having falsified the public census records of Larinum" (*tabulas publicas Larini censorias corrupisse*).[23] According to Lo Cascio, the census referred to in this passage must have been a local census conducted by the town of Larinum in 82 B.C.[24] We are therefore asked to believe that the local authorities of Larinum had no access to the results of the pan-Italian census of 86 and 85 B.C., and that this made it necessary for them to organize a completely new census three years after the completion of the *lustrum* of 85 B.C. I submit that this is a very strained interpretation even for those who believe that there was no decentralized Roman census procedure before the time of Caesar.[25]

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[19] Since self-governing *municipia* were neither *fora* nor *conciliabula* the phrase *fora et conciliabula* evidently cannot be interpreted as describing the *ager Romanus* as a whole (*pace* H. Mouritsen, *Italian Unification. A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (London 1998), 48–50).

[20] Crawford and Nicolet in Crawford 1996, op. cit. (n. 15), 388. Cf. also Humbert 1978, op. cit. (n. 13), 323–324.

[21] E. Lo Cascio, 'Le *professiones* della *Tabula Heracleensis* e le procedure del census in età cesariana', *Athenaeum* 78 (1990) 311, followed by Y. Thomas, *"Origine" et "commune patrie". Étude de droit public romain (89 av. J.-C.–212 ap. J.C.)* (Rome 1996), 110 n. 14.

[22] Livy 43.14.8.

[23] Cicero, *Pro Cluentio* 41.

[24] E. Lo Cascio, 'Il census a Roma e la sua evoluzione dall'età "serviana" alla prima età imperiale', *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome. Antiquité* 113 (2001), 592–594.

[25] Cf. Ph. Moreau, 'La mémoire fragile: falsification et destruction des documents publics au Ier s. av. J.-C.', in C. Nicolet (ed.), *La mémoire perdue. À la recherché des archives*

Those who believe the free Italian population to have been much larger than is usually thought also claim that the low estimates of Beloch, Brunt and Hopkins imply military mobilization rates that are implausibly high by early-modern standards. For instance, if Brunt's estimates are accepted, between 25 and 30 percent of all adult male citizens served in the Roman army between 213 and 203 B.C. Although this percentage goes down first to15 percent and eventually to some 10 percent during the second century B.C., even these lower participation rates are quite staggering. As Hopkins pointed out in his *Conquerors and Slaves*, similar mobilization rates are not to be found in Europe before the times of Frederick the Great and Napoleon, and in these cases high participation rates were sustained during brief periods. At first sight, this argument looks impressive. However, as Nathan Rosenstein has explained in his recent book on republican warfare, in assessing the economic feasibility of massive mobilization we must look not only at adult males but at the labour requirements of entire households.[26] In this context it should be remembered that the agrarian economy of republican Italy can be described as a so-called peasant economy that was characterized by a huge degree of underemployment. As Paul Erdkamp has pointed out in his book on republican warfare, this implies that military service should be seen not primarily as a disruptive force but as a form of withdrawing surplus labour that would otherwise have remained unused.[27] The correctness of this perspective has been confirmed by Rosenstein, whose calculations do not show any serious labour shortage as a result of legionary service.[28]

The same point can be made in another way. In one of the footnotes of the first chapter of *Conquerors and Slaves* Hopkins claims that the Romans cannot be compared with notoriously warlike tribes, such as the Zulus or the Red Indians, among whom rates of military

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oubliées publiques et privées, de la Rome antique (Paris 1994), 121–147, esp. 122–123; Thomas 1996, op. cit. (n. 21), 110 n. 14. There is nothing to support the theory that Larinum had a local census procedure that was independent of the Roman census. See the intervention by T. Wiseman in *Les bourgeoisies muncipales italiennes aux IIe et Ier s. av. J.-C.* (Paris-Naples 1983), 399, in which he withdraws the interpretation set out in *idem*, 'The Census in the First Century B.C.', *Journal of Roman Studies* 59 (1969), 67–68.

[26] N. Rosenstein, *Rome at War. Farms, Families and Death in the Middle Republic* (Chapel Hill and London 2004).

[27] P. Erdkamp, *Hunger and the Sword. Warfare and Food Supply in Roman Republican Wars (264–30 B.C.)* (Amsterdam 1998), 264–265 and 267.

[28] Rosenstein 2004, op. cit. (n. 26), 63–106.

participation were much higher than in the Roman republic.[29] Although I share Hopkins' view that these tribal societies are not directly relevant to the Roman case, they illustrate a general principle that is often ignored. What I mean by this is quite simply that the economic and demographic feasibility of a given mobilization rate depends on the economic structure of the society in question.[30] In my view, part of the reason why rates of military participation were lower in early modern Europe was simply that Europe had a more sophisticated economy in which structural underemployment was much lower than in Italy during the Hannibalic War.

I now move on to the archaeological evidence. In many publications written by the high-counters it is stated that their alternative scenario is supported by the survey evidence that has accumulated from the late 1950s onwards. In my view, even a superficial reading of the recent literature is enough to shed doubt on this claim. As is well known, Martin Frederiksen used the British South Etruria surveys to buttress his claim that the second century B.C. should be redefined as a period of population growth.[31] Unfortunately for the numerous adherents of this theory, subsequent reinvestigations of the archaeological material, notably those carried out by Liverani in 1984, showed this theory to be untenable. The main weakness of Frederiksen's thesis is that most of the black-glaze pottery assigned by him to the second century B.C. appears to date from the pre-Hannibalic period.[32] The recent re-survey of the Lower Tiber Valley has confirmed Liverani's conclusions.[33] Although we now have good evidence for a second-century recovery in terms of small sites, there can be no question of the kind of rapid rise required by the high count model. In Southern Italy, and especially in Lucania, Apulia and Bruttium, it is even harder to find archaeological

[29] Hopkins 1978, op. cit. (n. 7), 11 n. 19.

[30] S. Andreski, *Military Organization and Society* (London 1954).

[31] M. Frederiksen, 'The Contribution of Archaeology to the Agrarian Problem in the Gracchan Period', *Dialoghi di Archeologia* 4–5 (1970–71), 330–357.

[32] P. Liverani, 'L'ager veientanus in età repubblicana', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 52 (1984), 36–48.

[33] H. Patterson, H. di Giuseppe and R. Witcher, 'Three South Etruria "Crises": First Results of the Tiber Valley Project', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 72 (2004), 1–36. As has long been recognized, the sharp increase in the number of rural sites in the early Empire must reflect large-scale settlement of veterans by Caesar and Octavian.

evidence for a demographic recovery, let alone for fast demographic growth beyond the levels reached before the Hannibalic War.[34]

Another difficulty for the high count model has to do with the background to the Gracchan land reforms. As is well known, Appian describes Tiberius Gracchus as being worried by a shortage of military recruits which he calls *dusandria*.[35] According to the low-counters, we must at least accept that Tiberius Gracchus thought that the number of free country-dwelling citizens was declining, even if it does not necessarily follow that his perception of contemporary demographic developments was correct. According to the high-counters, however, the term *dusandria* does not refer to population decline at all. According to Lo Cascio, for instance, Appian would have used the term *oligandria* instead of *dusandria* if he had wanted to refer to a purely demographic phenomenon. In his view, Appian is to be re-interpreted as referring not to a shortage of adult men but to a lack of healthy adults having the kind of physique required for military service. The passage in question would then refer to the early stages of a Malthusian crisis caused by over-population.[36]

Against this theory it must be pointed out that Appian does in fact use purely demographical language, for instance when he says that Italy suffered from *oligotês* and *dusandria* and also when he refers to Tiberius Gracchus' claim that Italy was being reduced to *aporia* (poverty) and *oligandria*, which can only mean 'a lack of men'.[37] It is, moreover, difficult to understand how the idea that Appian refers to the onset of a Malthusian crisis can be reconciled with Lo Cascio's view that the free Italian population continued to grow at a rate of 0.4 per cent annually for another century. In other words, the high-count scenario leads not only to a rejection of the census figures for the second century B.C. but also to a contrived re-interpretation of the literary tradition

[34] See the contributions in E. Lo Cascio and A. Storchi Marino (eds), *Modalità insediative e strutture agrarie nell'Italia meridionale nell'età romana* (Bari 2001), the main findings of which are conveniently summarized by E. Fentress, 'Toynbee's Legacy: Southern Italy after Hannibal', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005), 482–488.

[35] Appian, *Bella Civilia* 1.7. Cf. Morley 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), 60: "The obvious difficulty with this account of events lies of course in the fact that it is not only Beloch and Brunt who talk of 'manpower shortages' in the late Republic."

[36] E. Lo Cascio, 'Il rapporto uomini-terra nel paesaggio dell'Italia romana', *Index* 33 (2004), 107–121.

[37] Appian, *Bella Civilia* 1.7 and 1.9.

concerning the Gracchan land reforms, which makes no sense from a demographical point of view.

Even though most of the arguments used by the high-counters are problematic, it must be conceded that their overall reconstruction seems to be supported by the Augustan census figures. The earliest of these is the figure for 28 B.C., when 4,063,000 Roman citizens were counted. From the *Res Gestae* it appears that this figure refers to the number of *capita censa civium Romanorum*, the same expression that Livy uses in the case of the republican census figures.[38] As we have seen, the census figures for the third and second centuries B.C. are generally interpreted as referring not to the entire citizen population, including women and children, but to adult men only. It seems therefore natural to interpret the Augustan figure as also referring to adult males of citizen status. From this it would follow that Italy was inhabited by some 4 million adult male citizens and therefore by some 12 million men, women and children of citizen status in the early Principate. If we add some 3 million slaves and foreigners, we arrive at the conclusion that the free and unfree population of early-imperial Italy was in the order of 15 million people.

In order to buttress their interpretation, the high-counters have searched the literary sources for clues concerning the identity of those who were counted in the census of 28 B.C. At first sight, the high-count model seems to be confirmed by the Greek version of Eusebius' *Chronicon*, which explicitly states that Augustus counted the number of men (*andres*).[39] On closer inspection, however, these late sources appear of little help. The obvious reason for this is that Eusebius or his sources are unlikely to have had access to information that did not ultimately depend on Augustus' statement that he registered some 4 million *capita civium*. In other words, although the passage from the *Chronicon* clearly shows that Eusebius interpreted the Augustan figure as referring to adult male citizens, it cannot be regarded as an independent source providing us with information not contained in the *Res Gestae*.

It has also been claimed that the high-count scenario requires us to assume that Augustus changed the character of the census by including women and children.[40] Developing this argument, Lo Cascio and some

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[38] *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 8.2.

[39] Lo Cascio 1994, op. cit. (n. 1), 32 + n. 53 referring to Eusebius, *Chronicon*, p. 146 Schoene. The term *andres* is also found in *Suidas* s.v. Augoustos Kaisar.

[40] For example Morley 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), 51.

of his followers have pointed out that this is not the kind of behaviour one would expect from a man who wrote in his *Res Gestae* "by new laws passed on my proposal I brought back into use many exemplary practices of our ancestors (*exempla maiorum*) which were disappearing in our time".[41]

A glance at the context of this passage is enough to reveal that the appeal to Augustus' traditionalist policies carries little weight, if only because the second half of the sentence runs as follows: "and in many ways I myself transmitted exemplary practices to posterity for their imitation" (*et ipse multarum rerum exempla imitanda posteris tradidi*). What is more important, however, is that those who opt for a low-count scenario do not thereby commit themselves to the view that 'Augustus changed the basis of the census' by adopting a new policy of registering men, women and children. The reason for this is quite simply that already in republican times the censors aimed to register not just all men of military age but *all people of citizen status, including women and children*. As Dionysius of Halicarnassus explains in his account of the (no doubt legendary) first census carried out by Servius Tullius, those Roman citizens who were under the obligation to register themselves (i.e. all adult men who were *sui iuris*) "were also to set down the names of their fathers, with their own age and the names of their wives and children".[42] As Mommsen pointed out in his *Römisches Staatsrecht*, this must be the background to the amusing anecdote concerning the census of 184 B.C. which is found in Gellius. According to this anecdote one of those who was asked the traditional question "Do you have a wife to the best of your knowledge and belief (*ex animi tui sententia*)" replied "I indeed have a wife but not, by Heaven!, such a one as I could desire (*sed non mehercle ex animi mei sententia*)".[43]

The comprehensive character of the republican census dispenses with the need to assume that the census of 28 B.C. was the first in which women and children were registered.[44] The only assumption that needs

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[41] *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 8.5, on which see Lo Cascio 1994, op. cit. (n. 1), 31 and n. 52; Kron 2005, op. cit. (n. 1), 456–457 and n. 87.

[42] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiquitates Romanae* 4.15.6. Cf. Cicero, *De Legibus* 3.3.7: *censores populi aevitates suboles familias pecuniasque censento*.

[43] Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 4.20.4–5, to be consulted with T. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*, vol. II (Leipzig 1887[3]), 373. I am grateful to Simon Northwood for drawing my attention to this anecdote.

[44] For the inclusion of women in the early-imperial census cf. Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 7.162–163, from which it appears that two women aged 130 and 137 registered

to be made is that Octavian decided to report the total number of *cives* who had been registered rather than merely the number of adult male citizens. Although such a decision would have been a novelty, it would not have been a radical break with the republican tradition. It is hardly necessary to explain that this interpretation is perfectly compatible with the use of the traditional phrase *civium capita*. As has often been noted, several late-republican and early-imperial texts use the terms *cives* and *capita* to denote all people of citizen status. It is striking, for instance, that the *Tabula Heracleensis* does not specifically instruct local magistrates to register all men, women and children of citizen status, but simply provides that all *municipes* and colonists *q(uei) c(ives) R(omanei) erunt* are to be registered. As Mommsen realized, the explanation must be that the phrase *cives Romanei* covers the entire citizen population.[45]

The reason or reasons that may have induced Octavian to report the total number of *cives* must remain a matter of speculation.[46] As Beloch and Brunt have suggested, the inclusion of women and children may reflect Octavian's wish to assess the state of the citizen body as a whole. On this view, the decision to report the total number of citizens would be linked with the emperor's well-known concern over levels of marriage and fertility.[47] Alternatively, it may be speculated that the inclusion of women and children reflects a more general obsession with symbolic (and actual) control over people and territory. As Claude Nicolet demonstrated in his *L'Inventaire du Monde*, Augustus and his associates had an interest in 'mapping the world', which was

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themselves during the census of A.D. 74. Although these women were presumably widows, the evidence cited in the main text leaves no doubt that the republican censors were expected register all women of citizen status. Cf. also D. Rathbone, '*PSI* XI 1183: Record of a Roman Census Declaration of A.D. 47/8', in T. Gagos and R.S. Bagnall (eds.), *Essays in Honor of J. David Thomas* (Oakville 2001), 112, for the suggestion that the reference to the tribal affiliation of a women of citizen status in an Egyptian census declaration of A.D. 47 of 48 may reflect the Augustan inclusion of adult women citizens in the published census totals.

[45] *Tabula Heracleensis*, lines 145–146, as interpreted by Mommsen 1887, op. cit. (n. 43), 362 n. 4. Cf. Caesar, *De Bello Gallico* 1.29, in which the 110,000 *Helvetiorum capita* counted in a local census comprised the entire Helvetian population, and *CIL* 3.6687, lines 8–11 (refering to the census conducted by Quirinius in Syria in A.D. 6 or 7), in which the expression *millium homin(um) civium CXVII* clearly refers to men, women and children. See for example J. and J. Balty, 'Apamée de Syrie, archéologie et histoire. I. Des origins à la Tétrarchie', in *ANRW* 2.8, 117–119.

[46] In their turn the high-counters can only speculate about the reason or reasons why the Augustan censuses were carried out with far greater efficiency than those of the third and second centuries B.C.

[47] For example Brunt 1987, op. cit. (n. 3), 114.

reflected not only by Agrippa's world map but also by an upsurge in agrimensorial activity.[48] The notion that all Roman citizens were to be registered might well be an offshoot of this general policy. Finally, we must also reckon with the mundane possibility that Octavian wanted to report a high census figure simply because he had an interest in presenting a favourable picture of the state of the *res publica*. Needless to say, in the absence of hard evidence, it cannot be determined which of these motives played a part. At most we may conclude that there is no lack of *possible* reasons that *might* have prompted Octavian the total number of people of citizen status.

In the final analysis it remains the case that the low-count scenario can only be maintained by interpreting the Augustan census figures differently from those available for the Republic. It must, however, be emphasized that the high-counters have to face even greater interpretational difficulties. As we have seen, their reconstruction rests not only on a questionable reading of the republican census figures but also on a strained re-interpretation of the literary tradition concerning the background to the Gracchan land reforms. At the same time, the census figure for 70–69 B.C., when no more than 900,000 or 910,000 adult male citizens were registered, remains a formidable obstacle for the high-counters, especially because their attempt to explain this figure as reflecting the use of a centralized census procedure is demonstrably wrong.[49] After everything has been said, the high-counters' failure to come up with a convincing explanation for the jump from 910,000 to 4 million *cives* in a period of forty-one years remains the best argument in favour of a low-count scenario of demographic development during the last two centuries of the Republic.

Leiden, December 2006

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[48] C. Nicolet, *L'inventaire du monde: géographie et politique aux origines de l'Empire romain* (Paris 1988), translated into English as *Space, Geography, and Politics in the Early Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor, MI 1991).

[49] Although Lo Cascio 1994, op. cit. (n. 1) and Kron 2005, op. cit. (n. 1), think that the enfranchisement of Transpadana is part of the answer, it remains the case that this area cannot have contained more than a quarter of the free Italian population. Precisely for this reason the high-counters have to assume that approximately 70 per cent of the adult male citizen population remained unregistered by the censors of 70–69 B.C.. Cf. Scheidel 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 167–168. Since Lo Cascio's latest estimates imply an annual growth rate of ca. 0.4 per cent, the rate of underregistration implied by his model is actually slightly higher than the rate of 68 to 70 per cent calculated by Scheidel on the basis of a growth rate of 0.5 per cent.

GIBBON WAS RIGHT: THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN ECONOMY*

Willem M. Jongman

Roman economic history as world history

Why did the Roman Empire fall? For centuries the question has excited many people, and rightly so. In recent decades, however, the question seems to have lost its legitimacy. Instead, in the work of some of the finest Roman historians of our time the very notion of decline and fall has been replaced by that of transformation: 'the Roman Empire did not fall, it just transformed into something different.'

It was the genius of Peter Brown above all who showed us the continued vitality and originality of late antique culture, and who taught us the inadequacy of traditional chronologies.[1] It was a revisionism that fitted perfectly with the cultural and political criticism of the nineteen sixties and after. It questioned the validity and centrality of one of the cultural icons of western civilization: the classical period of classical antiquity. Thus, it was part of a larger revisionism that also included a bigger role for the history of the Roman provinces, or the histories of women and slaves. As economic history it also fitted perfectly with the emerging structural economic history of the *longue durée*, where change was only superficial, and where the fundamental characteristics of the economic system remained forever the same. Finally, it fitted perfectly with a Finleyan pessimism that treated all of ancient economic history as one static system that never saw any real progress in technology or standard of living.[2] If the ancient economy had never been much of a success, it could not have declined dramatically either.

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* I should like to thank François de Catalaÿ and JRA for permission to publish graphs 1 and 2, Burghart Schmidt for graphs 3 and 4, and Cambridge University Press for my graphs 5 and 6.

[1] P.R.L. Brown, *The world of late antiquity: from Marcus Aurelius to Muhammed* (London 1971) is seminal.

[2] M.I. Finley, *The ancient economy* (London 1973).

Here, I want to present an alternative and more dynamic account.[3] Inevitably the perspective of the rise of the modern economy looms large over any account of economic change. We live in a world of rapid economic growth such as the world has never seen before. Over a period of one or two centuries human life has changed beyond recognition. On average we live some three times longer than our ancestors, there are vastly more of us, and we are far more prosperous. The transition, moreover, has come about over a period of less than a century. Since then, we are on a voyage of no-return into what may well be environmental oblivion. The question how this (and the concomitant cultural and political changes) could have come about is quite obviously the most important question any historian could ask. A common answer is that the rise of the modern economy is the product of a long, slow, and uniquely European process of historical change predisposing the European economy for the rapid change that was to come with the Industrial Revolution. For an ultimate explanation for this success of the modern western economy many historians have looked to the rise of the medieval commercial bourgeoisie and the cultural, social and economic changes that went with it.[4] From then on, history moved in only one direction, and that was up. Ancient historians have largely concurred with this medievalist *Annales* paradigm, and focused on why the modern world did not begin even earlier. Antiquity thus became a primitive precursor of the medieval world. In this model too the trend is upwards, but from an even lower starting point.

Unknown to many ancient historians, however, a new paradigm for the rise of the modern economy has emerged emphasizing the essential discontinuity of the rise of the modern world.[5] Thus, in this view the Industrial Revolution is once again industrial and revolutionary, and the rise of modernity owes little to centuries long past. In a related argument, world historians such as Ken Pomeranz have argued that on the eve of the Industrial Revolution China, for example, was at least

[3] C.f. W.M. Jongman, 'Slavery and the growth of Rome. The transformation of Italy in the first and second century B.C.E.', in C. Edwards and G. Woolf (eds.), *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge 2003), 100–122.

[4] W.M. Jongman, *The Economy and society of Pompeii* (Amsterdam 1988) chapter 1 for extended comparative discussion.

[5] E.A. Wrigley, *Continuity, Chance and Change. The Character of the Industrial Revolution in England* (Cambridge 1988).

as advanced as Europe, if not more so.[6] Europe's success, therefore, cannot be explained by centuries of slow economic and social change predisposing it for the part it was to play later. The model of the upward millennial trend has thus been discredited, and ancient historians would do well to abandon their search for reasons why modernity did not rise in antiquity.

So what are we left with for pre-industrial history? Was it all one *longue durée* of life at or near subsistence? The answer is that it was not. Pre-industrial *per capita* incomes could be quite different between regions and periods, from near-subsistence to about three times subsistence (anything better had to wait until after the Industrial Revolution).[7] The classic explanation for the differences is in the land-labour ratio.[8] When population increased, more and more people had to work smaller and smaller plots of land. This intensive cultivation improved the productivity of the land, but at the expense of labour productivity and, therefore, labour incomes.[9] Thus, population and popular prosperity always moved in opposite directions. Periods of population pressure witnessed a declining standard of living for labour, increased rents and elite incomes, and therefore, greater social inequality. An epidemic such as the Black Death of the middle of the fourteenth century was a blessing in disguise for the survivors. This is the bleak Malthusian scenario, in which real economic growth does not exist: increased aggregate production under population pressure cannot qualify as real growth since it is at the expense of *per capita* incomes. Conversely, it would be equally perverse to think of improved *per capita* incomes in the wake of demographic decline as economic growth. To qualify as real economic growth, both population and *per capita* incomes (and thus even more so aggregate income) must move in the same direction, and for a lengthy period of time. Did this ever happen before the Industrial Revolution?

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[6] K. Pomeranz, *The great divergence. China, Europe, and the making of the modern world economy* (Princeton 2000); but see R.C. Allen, T. Bengtsson and M. Dribe (eds.), *Living standards in the past: new perspectives on well-being in Asia and Europe* (Oxford 2005) for critical data on a comparatively low Chinese standard of living.

[7] Allen, Bengtsson and Dribe 2005, op. cit. (n. 6) for a recent survey.

[8] Jongman 1988, op. cit. (n. 4), 85–91 for discussion, and an application to ancient history.

[9] Ancient historians often confuse labour productivity, productivity of the land, and total factor productivity.

Roman economic growth and decline

It is my contention that Rome in the late Republic and early Empire was one of those rare examples of real pre-industrial economic growth (others would be the Dutch Republic and England in the centuries just before the Industrial Revolution). The last one or two centuries B.C. and the first one or two centuries A.D. witnessed the rise of the first and at the time largest world-empire of human history.[10] That Empire, moreover, was not only large, but also populous. Even if much of Rome's demographic history will escape us forever, I think there is scholarly consensus that population density in the Roman Empire was not only high, but that population pressure was highest in the first and early second centuries A.D. What I want to argue, however, is that contrary to what one would expect the population pressure of the late Republic and early Empire did not only increase aggregate production and consumption, but that there were also clear improvements in *per capita* production and consumption: there was some real prosperity growth.[11] Thus, Roman material culture of the early Empire was unprecedented, and would remain unsurpassed for many centuries (until, perhaps, a century ago). Our Renaissance ancestors were quite right to be amazed when they saw, for example, the ruins of an ancient city of Rome that once held a million people. It had indeed been a city of marble: in two centuries the Romans quarried more marble than has been quarried in the world since antiquity.[12] Rome and the other cities of the empire had a spectacular built environment such as the world would not see for a long time to come, with public baths, aqueducts, arenas, temples, paved roads, drains, and splendid elite housing.

However, Roman grandeur had been more than brick and marble, and included a new prosperity for many if not all. From the late fourth and early third century B.C. increased urban demand for food had stimulated the growth of larger farms and the production of market

[10] W.M. Jongman, 'The Roman economy: from cities to empire', in L. de Blois and J. Rich (eds.), *The transformation of economic life under the Roman Empire.* Impact of Empire 2 (Amsterdam 2002), 28–47.

[11] W.M. Jongman, 'The early Roman Empire: consumption', in R.P. Saller, I. Morris and W. Scheidel (eds.), *The Cambridge economic history of the Greco-Roman world* (Cambridge 2007), 592–618.

[12] J.C. Fant, 'Ideology, gift and trade: a distribution model for the Roman imperial marbles', in W.V. Harris, *The Inscribed Economy* (Ann Arbor 1993), 145–170; P.F.B. Jongste, *Het Gebruik van Marmer in de Romeinse Samenleving* (Leiden 1995).

crops. A network of Roman roads both large and small had begun to integrate urban and rural economies.[13] This new wealth was not just the wealth of a small elite (although the elite did indeed grow significantly richer), but reached an increasingly prosperous subelite, and significant sections of the working population. The cities of the late Republic and early Empire were magnets drawing immigrants into an expanding urban economy of manufacturing and extravagant public and domestic service.[14]

Thus, Rome's economic achievement was great enough for decline to be potentially dramatic. And indeed a few centuries later in many parts of the Empire (though probably not in all) much of the grandeur was gone. Population had declined, sometimes dramatically, cities were much smaller, interregional trade had declined, industrial and agricultural production were less than before, and for many standard of living was much lower than before. There was indeed decline before the fall.

Evidence

Before we turn to possible explanations, I want to present some evidence – both old and new – of this dramatic contrast between early imperial prosperity and subsequent decline. Roman wages are badly known, but even so for the early imperial period they seem to have been well above subsistence.[15] The high cost of wage labour is mirrored in high and rising prices of slaves (theoretically, high slave prices imply wages that were well above subsistence).[16] During the late Republic, and precisely during the period of increasing slave supplies, slave prices rose perhaps two-fold.[17] The growth of slavery in the face of rising slave prices shows that it was demand driven and probably reflected a higher cost of wage labour.

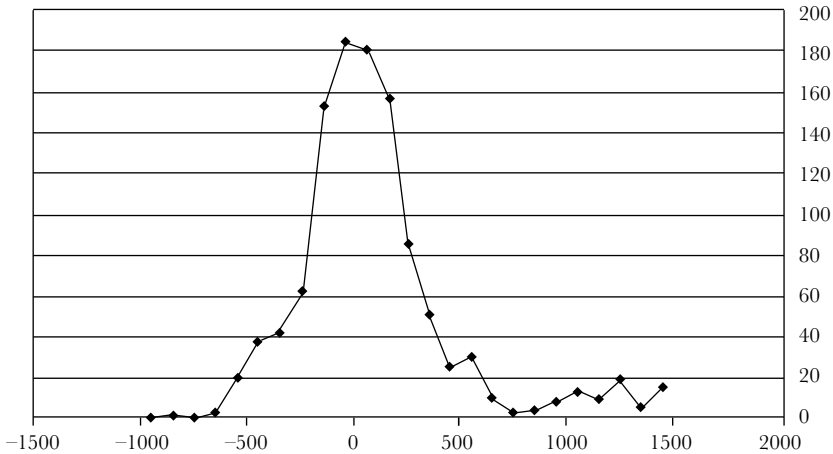
Most other data are archaeological, however, and I do indeed believe that it is only archaeology that can provide the large datasets that we need as empirical foundation for a time series analysis of long term

[13] R.Laurence, *The roads of Roman Italy: mobility and cultural change* (London 1999).
[14] Jongman 2003, op. cit. (n. 3), 100–122.
[15] Jongman 2007, op. cit. (n. 11), 592–618; 600–602.
[16] For the logic: E. Domar, 'The causes of slavery or serfdom: a hypothesis', *Economic History Review* 30.1 (1970), 18–32.
[17] K. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge 1978), 161 and 167; Jongman 2007, op. cit. (n. 11), 601–602.

economic change in antiquity. I appreciate that some of these datasets may be and have been criticized singly, but I also believe that the independent repetition of the same pattern in a large number of separate archaeological datasets argues firmly against too much scepticism.

The first graph to ever show the dramatic picture of late Republican and early imperial growth, and subsequent decline, was the now famous graph Keith Hopkins published from Parker's catalogue of Roman shipwrecks.[18] As Hopkins observed, for a few centuries, long distance maritime trade (as measured by dated shipwrecks) was larger than ever before, but also larger than it would be for many centuries to come.

As François de Calataÿ recently argued, this dramatic rise and subsequent decline of dated Roman shipwrecks was part of a larger pattern.[19] Ice cores from Greenland show late Republican and early Imperial

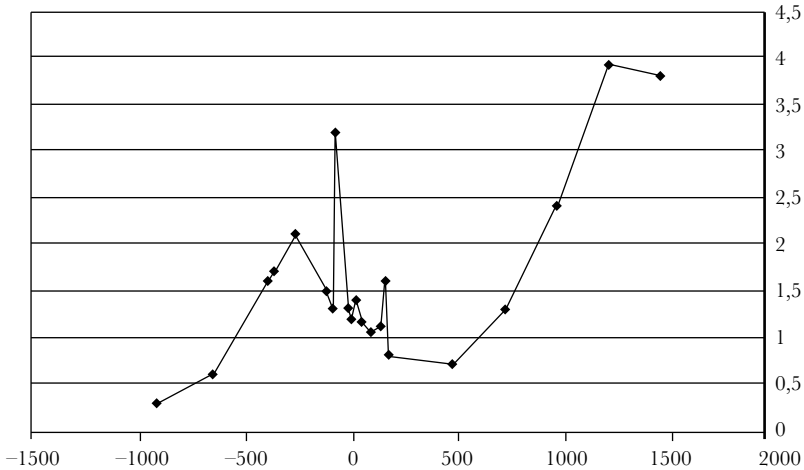


Graph 1: dated shipwrecks (from De Calataÿ 2005)

[18] K. Hopkins, 'Taxes and trade in the Roman Empire (200 B.C.–A.D. 400)', *Journal of Roman Studies* 70 (1980), 101–125, especially 105–106 based on data from Parker's subsequently published catalogue: A.J. Parker, *Ancient shipwrecks of the Mediterranean and the Roman provinces* (Oxford 1992), 580. See F. de Calataÿ, 'The Greco-Roman economy in the super long run: lead, copper and shipwrecks', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005), 361–372; K. Hopkins, 'Rome, taxes, rents and trade', in W. Scheidel and S. von Reden (eds.), *The ancient economy* (Edinburg 2002), 190–230 for a later version of the argument.

[19] De Calataÿ 2005, op. cit. (n. 18).

levels of atmospheric metal pollution that testify to a spectacular peak in metal extraction during the period. Money supply could thus increase dramatically during the second and first century B.C.[20] In the early Roman Empire monetary stock was proportionally even larger than in any period of European pre-industrial history.[21]



Graph 2: Lead pollution in Greenland ice cores[22]

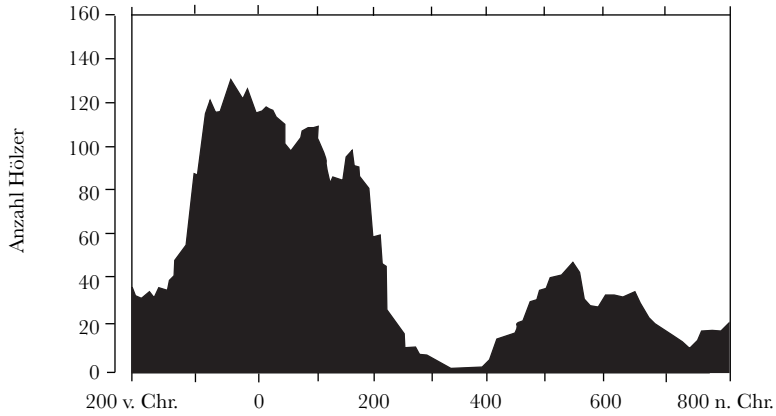
Other datasets show a similar pattern. For example, the chronology of (very precisely) dated wood remains from western and southern Germany shows a pattern of building activity with (after an early imperial peak) a steep decline from the late second century A.D., and a partial late antique and early medieval recovery. [23]

[20] Hopkins 1980, op. cit. (n. 18).

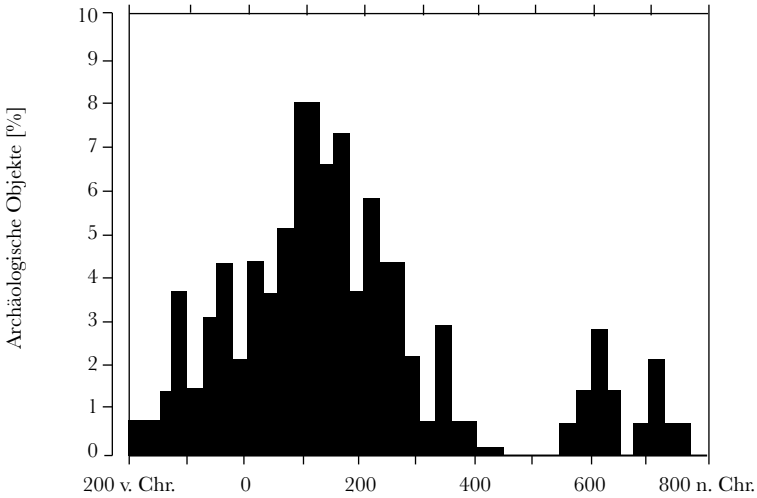
[21] W.M. Jongman, 'A golden age. Death, money supply and social succession in the Roman Empire' in E. Lo Cascio (ed.), *Credito e moneta nel mondo romano* (Bari 2003), 181–96.

[22] De Calataÿ 2005, op. cit. (n. 18), 370.

[23] B. Schmidt and W. Gruhle, 'Klimaextreme in Römischen Zeit – Ein Strukturanalyse dendrochronologischer Daten', *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt* 33 (2003) 421–427, graphs at 422.



Graph 3: dated wood remains from western Germany (Trier laboratory)



Graph 4: archaeological finds in western Germany (Trier laboratory)

Similarly we may look at Hollstein's chronology of archaeological finds in western Germany. It shows a marked peak under the Principate, but a steep decline thereafter.[24]

[24] E. Holstein, *Mitteleuropäische Eichenchronologie* (Mainz 1980), 137.

The late Republican and early Imperial peak for such aggregate variables is perhaps not surprising. What is surprising is the extent of that growth: shipping, metal extraction, or building had obviously increased by much more than could be expected from just population growth. Similarly, decline was much steeper than could be expected from just demographic contraction. This confirms the story of the wage data and slave prices: *per capita* incomes did not decline under population pressure. On the contrary, I think we can see an improved standard of living, and, therefore, a measure of real economic growth in the face of a rising population. This new wealth was also, I now believe, shared more widely than earlier pessimistic critics of Roman society such as myself were willing to acknowledge. Equally, however, the demographic contraction from the late second century A.D. did not improve standard of living – on the contrary.

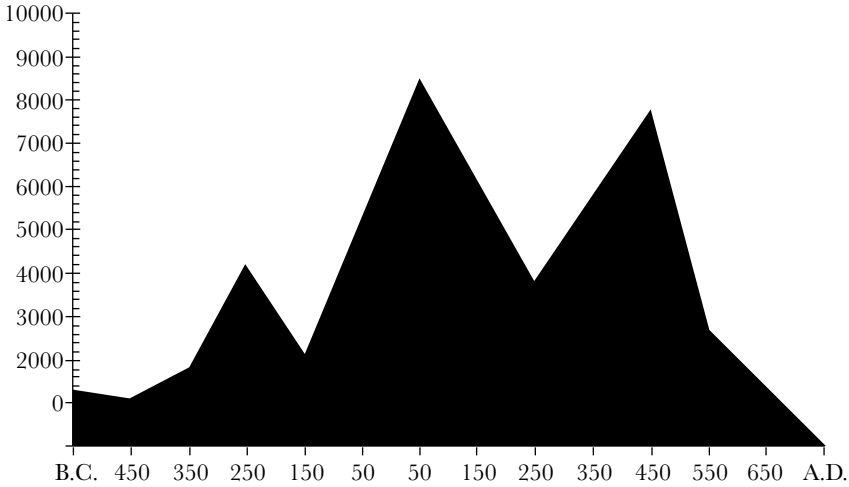
Diet is another obvious indicator of standard of living. The Roman conquest of North Western Europe heralded an increasing consumption in that part of the world of a wide range of new fruits and vegetables.[25] However, after the richness of the early imperial diet, the range of fruits and vegetables available in the northwestern provinces decreased again in later antiquity. This same pattern is repeated with domestic animals. For a while, pigs, cows, sheep or horses, and even chicken, were much larger than ever before, and for a long time after.[26] Moreover, domestic animals not only had far more meat on them, but also many more of them were eaten: the chronological distribution of animal bone assemblages shows rapid increases of meat consumption in Italy from the third century B.C. onwards (graph 5), and from the first century B.C. in the provinces (graph 6). [27]

I take these graphs to represent meat consumption. The chronological distribution of Roman animal bone assemblages follows a pattern that is remarkably similar to other chronological distributions of Roman economic activity. With the growth of the Roman Empire, larger parts of the population had become prosperous enough to improve their diet with meat. That is important because more than quantity,

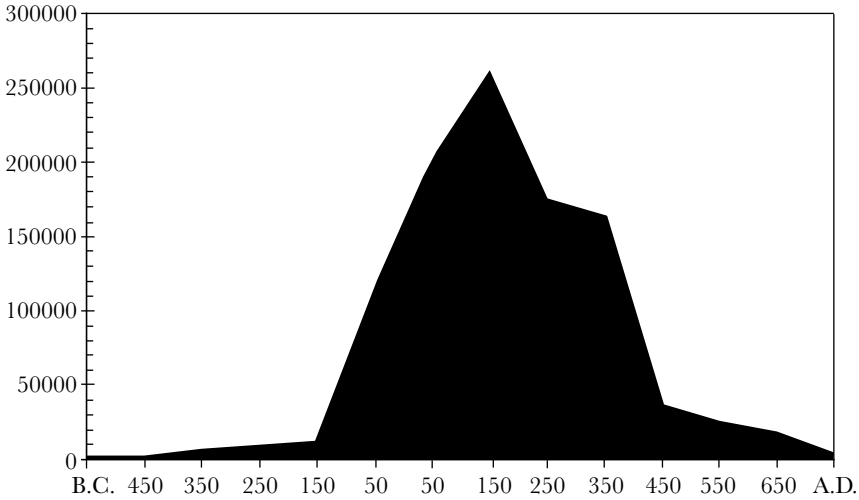
[25] C.C. Bakels and S. Jacomet, 'Access to luxury foods in Central Europe during the Roman period', *World Archaeology* 34 (2003), 542–557.

[26] G. Kron, 'Archaeozoology and the productivity of Roman livestock farming', *Münstersche Beiträge zur antiken Handelsgeschichte* 21.2 (2002), 53–73.

[27] Jongman 2007, op. cit. (n. 11), 613–614, based on data in A. King, 'Diet in the Roman world: a regional inter-site comparison of the mammal bones', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12 (1999), 168–202, and his earlier data collections referred to there.



Graph 5: Animal bone assemblages in Roman Italy
(bones deposited per century)



Graph 6: Animal bone assemblages in the provinces of the Roman Empire
(bones deposited per century)

it is the quality of the diet that shows improvements in the standard of living. Meat was expensive food, but also tasty and healthy. The income elasticity of demand for meat was high: the very poor could not afford meat, but even moderately higher incomes lead to a substantially increased demand for meat. Conversely, the very rich would not eat more meat than those who were just plain rich. Thus, as an indicator, meat consumption is sensitive precisely where one most wants such sensitivity. Unfortunately, and as with other signs of prosperity during the early Roman Empire, these benefits did not last: the subsequent decline was as steep as the growth, even if it is muted in the graph by uncertainties about the precise dating of some sites. For many of these datasets a higher chronological resolution is both desirable and possible. I would expect to find a steeper and more clearly dated decline, once imprecisely dated observations are removed (to do that is one of my research priorities for the next few years).[28] Further advances are also possible when we subdivide datasets (provided they are large enough). As an example, animal bone deposition in Roman Italy shows a distinct pattern that should interest the historian: the third century A.D. shows a dramatic decline, but recovery thereafter was marked until the final late antique demise.

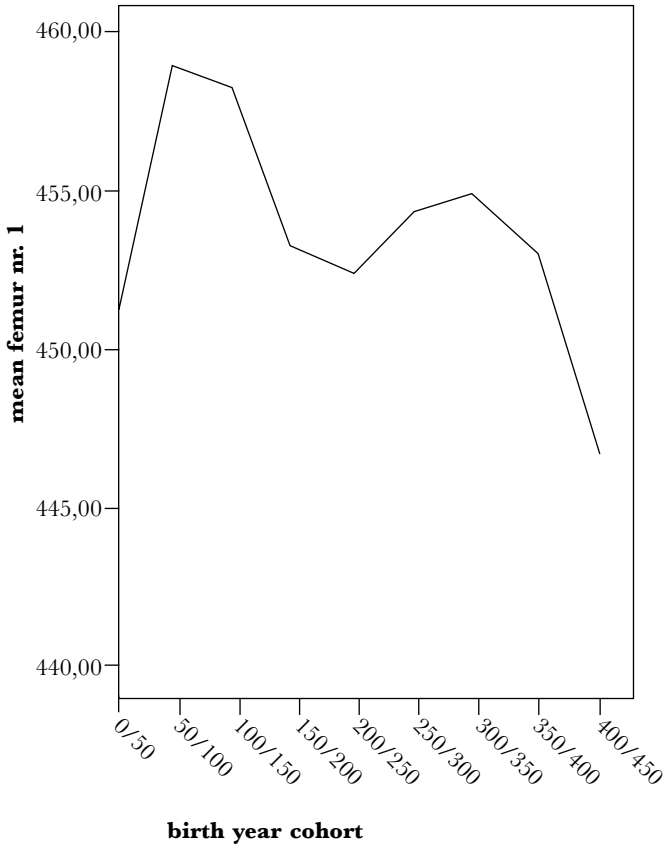
Meat also confers real health benefits. Perhaps as a result, Romans also became taller: under the Principate Romans became about the tallest, and presumably most prosperous, pre-industrial Europeans.[29] When people are well-fed and healthy they grow taller than those who are undernourished and disease ridden. Modern economic historians such as Robert Fogel have successfully used stature data to reconstruct the modern rise in the standard of living.[30] For earlier times, the approach

[28] Chronology matters, and too often I am frustrated by the presentation of grouped data, with, for example, historically uselessly large periods such as 'first and second century A.D.' and 'third and fourth century A.D.' With a bit of effort, these published archaeological time series can be made much more precise, and that is one of the things I intend to do. An example is in the shipwreck graph as originally published by Hopkins. He had time periods of two centuries, and as a result the rise and decline seemed quite slow. In François de Calataÿ's recent version, the time periods are shorter, and we can now see that decline set in earlier.

[29] G.M. Klein Goldewijk and W.M. Jongman, 'They never had it so good. Roman stature and the biological standard of living', forthcoming.

[30] R.W. Fogel, *The escape from hunger and premature death, 1700–2100: Europe, America and the Third World.* (Cambridge 2004); J. Komloss (ed.), *Stature, living standards, and economic development: essays in anthropometric history* (Chicago 1994); R. Steckel and J. Rose (eds.), *The Backbone of History. A History of Health and Nutrition in the Western Hemisphere* (Cambridge and New York) 2002.

needs skeletal data. For a variety of reasons previous research failed to crack these data properly, and recover any patterns.[31] A combination of better archaeology and physical anthropology on the one hand, and statistical simplicity on the other hand shows what had escaped until now.



Graph 7: the history of Roman femur length[32]

[31] N. Koepke and J. Baten, 'The biological standard of living in Europe during the last two millennia', *European Review of Economic History* 9 (2005), 61–95; G. Kron, 'Anthropometry, physical anthropology and the reconstruction of ancient health, nutrition and living standards', *Historia* 56 (2005), 68–83. The biggest problem was the use of total body length as core variable when that total body length is often only a reconstruction from measurements of no more than a few long bones, and of the femur in particular.

[32] From Klein Goldewijk and Jongman forthcoming, op. cit. (n. 29).

Again, the rise is spectacular – the first and early second century peak equates European stature in the early twentieth century. Decline clearly set in in the late second century A.D., to be followed by a recovery later in the third century, and ultimate collapse with the fall of the Western Empire. As with the animal bone data, the late antique recovery is due to Mediterranean sites in our sample. In North Western Europe, the biological standard of living did not recover from the late second century shock.

The rupture

The precise chronology of these data is interesting, in that decline seems to have set in sometime in the late second century. An obvious candidate for an explanation would be the Antonine Plague that cursed the Roman world from precisely the mid 160's.[33] Of course, some have expressed reservations about the impact of the Antonine Plague, but I really think too many datasets show remarkable disruptions in the late second century. It is evident that the same pattern occurs in far more data series than those originally published by Duncan-Jones.

At the same time, as John Nicols has argued so persuasively in his paper for this volume, climate change may also have a part in this story. From about the late second century A.D., and after a few centuries of remarkably warm and humid weather, Rome was entering a period of cooler and dryer weather that was to last a few centuries.

It is too early for an assessment of the relative impact of these two changes.[34] We know the Antonine Plague occurred, and we know it recurred. What we do not know is how severe the demographic effect was – although I think we have highly suggestive evidence that it was substantial.[35] As for empire-wide climate change, the change itself may be more controversial, but few would deny that such climate change

[33] R.P. Duncan-Jones, 'The impact of the Antonine plague', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9 (1996), 108–136 is fundamental.

[34] Analytically, the plague or climate change would have worked out somewhat differently. Both would have entailed changes in the land-labour ratio, and thus movement along the production function. Climate change would also have implied shifts off the production function itself (i.e. a negative technical change), because the same quantities of land and labour now produced less than before.

[35] Cf. C.P. Jones, 'Ten dedications "to the gods and goddesses" and the Antonine Plague', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005), 293–301.

could have hurt the Roman economy.[36] If, as I believe, there was indeed epidemic mortality, and if the climate did indeed deteriorate, we still do not know if these two external forces were independent from each other, or that climatic change had directly or indirectly changed the conditions for the outbreak of a major epidemic. Again, precise chronology may well provide the vital clues, or subdivisions of datasets to show regional variations. Both explanations are also strategically attractive because they are probably and perhaps largely (disease), or even certainly and completely (climate) exogenous to the economic system.

Responses

For the naïve historian, it would seem that we now have all we need: we have a range of examples of catastrophic decline, and some potential causes. What we do not yet have, however, are the mechanisms by which this shock propagated through the economic and social system. Imagine a pre-industrial and largely agricultural economy in a fairly stable equilibrium. Next that equilibrium is disturbed by catastrophic mortality: what do we expect to happen when the proportion between people and assets changes? On the monetary side, we would expect to see sudden and pretty rampant inflation. The monetary stock remains the same for the time being, and the velocity of circulation probably does not change either. What changes is the number of transactions, for the simple reason that at the very least there are far fewer people to perform these transactions. Monetary theory predicts that inevitably, therefore, prices will rise in proportion. As others have argued, that is precisely what Egyptian data seem to suggest: prices and wages rose quite dramatically in the wake of the Antonine Plague.[37] As every monetary historian knows, something else began to change as well: the coinage itself began its slide into substantial debasement. Theoretically, there was no need for that. The money stock was large, and by now even too large. The best policy would have been for the state to reduce

[36] J. Haas, *Die Umweltkrise des 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr. im Nordwesten des Imperium Romanum: interdisziplinäre Studien zu einem Aspekt der allgemeinen Reichskrise im Bereich der beiden Germaniae sowie der Belgica und der Raetia* (Stuttgart 2006) for caution.

[37] D. Rathbone, 'Prices and price formation in Roman Egypt', in J. Andreau, P. Briant and R. Descat (eds.), *Prix et formation des prix dans les économies antiques* (Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges 1997), 183–244. Empirically, the jury is still out on whether wages rose more than prices, or vice versa.

the money supply, by either taking money out of circulation, or by raising the precious metal content of the coins, so that fewer coins could be made out of the same metal stock. That did not happen, and the reason must have been the needs of the state. It had become difficult to collect taxes in the turmoil of the day, precisely when the state also had to finance huge military efforts. The easiest way to pay for that effort was to strike more coins. Unfortunately, there are good indications that the combination of epidemic disaster and military unrest had badly affected the Spanish mines. They could not produce the silver for the coins that now had to be struck from fresh metal instead of collected as taxes. Debasement, therefore, was not the cause of inflation, but the consequence of inflationary pressures affecting state and society.

The biggest economic and social change, however, was to the land-labour ratio. Population went down. I think that was because of the Antonine Plague, but it does not matter if the cause was different. Since nobody argues that late second and third century population went up, we need to think what consequences we would expect when population declined. More land per person inevitably means a lower aggregate production: production per hectare must have gone down, since there was more land to work in the same amount of time. For this reason, and because some of the worst land was probably abandoned, production per man hour must have gone up, and thus also incomes from agricultural labour. Conversely, rents must have gone down, and therefore the incomes of elite land-owners. The Roman Empire should have turned into a world of happy and prosperous peasants, and much greater social equality than before. The theory is impeccable, but reality was, of course, different.

Duncan-Jones has recently surveyed the evidence for agricultural change, and concluded that there were two trends: the first is that from the third or even late second century A.D. site numbers declined pretty steeply in many (though not all) parts of the Empire.[38] The second trend is that of a particularly steep decline of smaller sites, and an increase in the size of larger and sometimes even fortified sites. The agricultural decline seems to have gone together with a change in rural social relations.

[38] R.P. Duncan-Jones, 'Economic change and the transition to late antiquity', in S. Swain and M. Edwards (eds.), *Approaching late antiquity* (Oxford 2004), 20–52.

What we witness from the late second century is the emergence of a new social, political and legal regime, where oppression replaces the entitlements of citizenship. With the *Constitutio Antoniniana* of A.D. 212 virtually everyone was now a Roman citizen. The debasement of citizenship confirmed a trend that had started earlier in the second century with the emergence of a new social distinction between *honestiores* and *humiliores*.[39] Status distinctions between free citizens and slaves were beginning to be blurred. Just as slaves had become more expensive in the late Republic, precisely when supplies had increased, now they seem to have become cheaper again (this process is much less well attested), even if supplies were less. As Moses Finley has argued, demand for slaves declined because citizens could now be exploited more fully.[40] Theoretically, new market conditions for labour and land had created an improved bargaining position for labour and tenants. However, the land-owning elite countered this by the imposition of the non-economic force of oppression, as expressed in shifts in the laws of citizenship and status. At the crossroads of economic change, Rome debased the value of citizenship and followed the same route that Prussian Junkers were to follow during the so-called second serfdom.[41] Roman patterns of land-holding seem to have changed with the growth of really large estates, and the decline of medium sized estates. As for agricultural labour, it may not be coincidence that the late second century is precisely the period of so many complaints from disgruntled tenants.[42] The *coloni* of the *Saltus Burunitanus* of 180 were not alone to complain to the emperor about increased oppression and growing abuse.[43] When pushed hard enough, they could have moved, but that was precisely what was to become illegal. Tied to the land, they lost their powers in the market. The argument is, therefore, that the declining legal status of citizens was not in itself a reflection of a declining economic position, but an instrument imposed in the face of what would have been an improved economic position for the peasantry if the market would have had its way.

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[39] P.D.A. Garnsey, *Social status and legal privilege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1970).

[40] M.I. Finley, *Ancient slavery and modern ideology* (London 1980).

[41] R. Brenner, 'Agrarian class structure and economic development in pre-industrial Europe', *Past and Present* 70 (1976), 30–75.

[42] P. Herrmann, *Hilferufe aus römischen Provinzen: ein Aspekt der Krise des römischen Reiches im 3. Jhdt. n. Chr.* (Hamburg 1990); T. Hauken, *Petition and response: an epigraphic study of petitions to Roman emperors* (Bergen 1998), 181–249.

[43] See *CIL* 8.10570 and 8.14464.

This change in social relations is also reflected culturally. The late second century was a period of important cultural changes, for example in religion. Mithraism and perhaps a little later Christianity provided new forms of belonging and a sociability that no longer depended on civic life or patronal benevolence.[44] Finally, government itself changed. For me, the interesting thing is the resilience of the Roman state. For more than half a century, the Severan regime maintained the integrity and continuity of the Roman state in the face of extraordinary pressures. The surprise is not that it finally collapsed, but that it survived and even flourished for so long that the crisis later became known as the crisis of the third century, rather than the crisis of the second century that I think it was.

Just as remarkable as the temporary Severan recovery is the recovery from Diocletian. Clearly, it not only inaugurated a new period of stability and more orderly succession, but it also generated a measure of economic recovery, in particular it would seem in Italy or the Mediterranean at large. The recovery was substantial enough for late antique economic decline to be dramatic.

The real beginnings of that decline and fall, however, may have been in the beginning of a period of much colder and dryer weather, and in the scourge of the Antonine Plague. With the growth of its Empire, with the growth of its cities, and with the growth of a system of government and transportation based on those cities, Rome had created the perhaps most prosperous and successful pre-industrial economy in history. The age of Antoninus Pius was indeed probably the best age to live in pre-industrial history.

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University of Groningen

[44] R. Stark, *The rise of Christianity: a sociologist reconsiders history* (Princeton 1996); P.R.L. Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Hanover and London 2001).

THE ANTONINE PLAGUE AND THE 'THIRD-CENTURY CRISIS'

CHRISTER BRUUN*

Introduction: the Antonine plague

This paper will discuss two broad topics, the plague under Marcus Aurelius and the development of the Roman empire from the late second century onwards, and the relations between these two phenomena. The English word 'plague' is here used in the general sense of 'potentially lethal epidemic disease'. I do not want to imply that we are dealing with the 'bubonic plague' caused by the *yersinia pestis* bacillus (discovered or identified in 1894),[1] as today no one knows for certain what disease spread through the Roman world from 165 C.E. onwards, regardless of much speculation on the matter.[2]

The role of the plague among the causes of the 'third-century crisis'

The 'third century crisis' is in itself a debated topic, as is made abundantly clear in other contributions in this volume. To save time and space, I will simply take it for granted that changes affected the Roman world from the reign of Marcus Aurelius onwards which in certain

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[1] S.K. Cohn Jr., *The Black Death Transformed* (London 2002), 1. Cohn incidentally convincingly refutes the common notion that the European Black Death was bubonic plague, as do S. Scott and C.J. Duncan, *Biology of Plagues: Evidence from Historical Populations* (Cambridge 2001). The Black Death was likely a viral infection.

[2] Cf. W. Scheidel, 'A model of demographic and economic change in Roman Egypt after the Antonine plague', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 15 (2002), 97–114, especially 99 "If the Antonine Plague was indeed a highly virulent form of smallpox".

ways were detrimental to the stability of the Roman Empire. Several rulers of the Severan dynasty can be blamed for various actions, but arguably the roots of the problem went deeper, i.e., to the economic, social and political foundations of the Roman world. Some scholars have thought that the Antonine plague affected these foundations so deeply that Rome started to decline after the reign of Marcus Aurelius. The discussion in this paper will focus on the decades preceding and immediately following Marcus' reign, down to the end of the Severan dynasty; thus the military anarchy of the mid-third century will not concern us here.

The interest in the effects of the Antonine plague is not new in Roman history. While it played no role in Gibbon's work, already Niebuhr considered it to have had serious effects on the Roman empire, especially in the cultural sphere.[3] Another notable scholar with a similar view was Seeck.[4] The title of Boak's work on manpower shortage signals a similar approach,[5] while Mazzarino considered the plague and the wars under Marcus as the origin of the economic crisis of Rome.[6]

Rostovzeff, on the other hand, considered the plague on a par with foreign wars, poverty, and rebellion, and vehemently denied that depopulation would have constituted a factor in the weakening of the empire. He saw the roots of the crisis in a social upheaval in which the soldiery destroyed the bourgeois elite of the Roman world.[7] The recently discovered notes from Mommsen's lectures on Roman imperial history from 1883 show him to have been similarly brief on the plague and its effects.[8] He, like Rostovzeff later on, for the most part blamed political events for the budding crises under the Severans: "Lastly, there were the evil effects of incessant military insurrections.

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[3] B.G. Niebuhr, *Lectures on the History of Rome* III (London 1849), 251.

[4] O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt* I (Berlin 1910[3]), 398–405.

[5] A.E.R. Boak, *Manpower Shortage and the Fall of the Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor 1955), 19.

[6] S. Mazzarino, *La fine del mondo antico* (1959, reprint Milano 1988), 156–157.

[7] M.I. Rostovzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1957[2]), 371, 374–375, and at 495: "Now, no political aim was at stake: the issue between the army and the educated classes was the leadership of the state (…) Such was the real meaning of the civil war of the third century. The army fought the privileged classes, and did not cease fighting until these classes had lost all their social prestige and lay powerless and prostrate under the feet of the half-barbarian soldiery".

[8] Th. Mommsen, *A History of Rome under the Emperors* (Th. Wiedemann (ed.), translation C. Krojzl, London and New York 1996), 342.

How is a state to thrive when it changes its rulers by force every five years on average?".[9]

In the past decades the 'third-century crisis' has been the object of several monographs. The view of contemporaries such as Herodian and St. Cyprian have been analyzed by Alföldy.[10] Other contemporary sources, such as some of the *Oracula Sibyllina*, were once discussed by Mazzarino,[11] and have received major attention from Strobel, who argues that the Eighth Oracle was written around 175 C.E. in Asia Minor.[12] It is interesting to see that, among the many signs of impending doom, the author of the oracle singles out famine and war, but pays very little attention to disease, which really ought to have devastated many communities in Asia Minor for a decade already, if the worst scenarios of the Antonine plague are to be believed. Indeed no major consequences are attributed to the plague by Strobel, who is altogether reluctant to talk about a 'third-century crisis'.[13] Similarly Christian Witschel argues that the empire was so diversified that it is wrong to talk about a 'third-century crisis', while there were "numerous smaller crises which occurred regularly in pre-industrial times, such as failed harvests, famines, plagues, earthquakes, and the revolts which could result".[14]

In two recent authoritative collective enterprises the picture is more varied. First, in his contribution to the *Storia di Roma*, Elio Lo Cascio attributes great importance to the plague (both the Antonine one and a number of subsequent epidemics): the death-rate rose to 20% over a twenty-year period, and it would have taken the empire over seventy-five years to recover this loss of manpower, even if no other crises had intervened (which they did). From here stem the problems in recruiting

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[9] Mommsen 1996, op. cit. (n. 8), 345.

[10] G. Alföldy, *Die Krise des Römischen Reiches. Geschichte, Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbetrachtung. Ausgewählte Beiträge* (Stuttgart 1989). The author refers to plagues on several instances, but does not discuss the nature of the crisis much.

[11] Mazzarino 1959, op. cit. (n. 6), 38–39.

[12] K. Strobel, *Das Imperium Romanum im '3. Jahrhundert': Modell einer historischen Krise?* (Stuttgart 1993), 57.

[13] Strobel 1993, op. cit. (n. 12), 340–348: the worst period for Rome came in the 260s, there were some other difficult moments after ca. 250, but on the whole one should avoid labeling this transitional period ('Übergangsphase') a time of crisis.

[14] C. Witschel, 'Re-evaluating the Roman West in the 3rd c. A.D.', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 17 (2004), 251–281, especially 254 ("smaller crises"), 273 (conclusion); based on idem, *Krise – Rezession – Stagnation? Der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Frankfurt a.M. 1999).

soldiers, the settlement of barbarians inside the empire, and a wide-ranging social and economic crisis.[15]

Second, in volumes 11 and 12 of the revised *Cambridge Ancient History* the Antonine plague receives some attention. Bruce Frier writes "The Roman empire was not dealt a mortal blow, but the sudden population drop ushered in, or immensely complicated, a host of social and economic problems",[16] while Mireille Corbier is cautiously agnostic.[17]

The Antonine plague in Egypt

A vicious epidemic spread from the East to Rome, Italy and western parts of the Roman world in the wake of Lucius Verus' Parthian campaign (161–166 C.E.). There is no doubt about this, but there is a current debate about how serious the plague in reality was. Several rounds of this debate have been published in recent issues of the *Journal of Roman Archaeology*. Scholars have been debating the extent to which this epidemic disease affected the population, the society and the economy of the Roman world.

Walter Scheidel, in his most recent contribution on the topic in the *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, argued that the Antonine plague had a major, not to say a catastrophic effect on Egyptian society. Scheidel restricted his analysis to Egypt, although he also referred to some data from Rome and Italy that, he argued, provided substantiation for the dramatic changes he thought he could identify in Egypt after 165 C.E..[18] We shall turn to the evidence from Rome and Italy below, after first briefly considering the situation in Egypt.

Papyrological experts have entered the debate, in particular Roger Bagnall, who is the author of several acute contributions.[19] In 2002 he presented an evaluation of the same data that Scheidel had used

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[15] E. Lo Cascio, 'Fra equilibrio e crisi' in A. Schiavone (ed.), *Storia di Roma* II.2 (Torino 1991), 701–731, especially 710–716.

[16] B.W. Frier, 'Demography', *CAH*[2] 11, 787–816, especially 816. Compare E. Lo Cascio, 'General Development', *CAH*[2] 12, 131–136, especially 136, referring to "the inability of families [of the ruling class] to reproduce, especially from the years of Marcus, when epidemic outbreaks introduced periods of high 'crisis' mortality."

[17] M. Corbier, 'Coinage, Society and Economy', *CAH*[2] 12, 393–439, especially 398 on the Antonine plague, and the 'Plague of St. Cyprian': "All of these clues should, of course, be followed up, but it is hard to reconstruct the full picture".

[18] Scheidel 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 98.

[19] First in R.S. Bagnall, '*P. Oxy* 4527 and the Antonine plague in Egypt: death or flight?', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 13 (2000), 288–292. In support of Scheidel: P. van

to substantiate the claim that the development of prices and wages in Egypt followed the model relating to Europe in the period after the Black Death (*ergo*, in Scheidel's view, the Antonine plague must have been equal in intensity to the Black Death).[20] Bagnall had at his disposal just over fifty sources with information on land prices for the three first centuries C.E. (mostly dating to 80–200 C.E.), an amount of data that probably will not impress many modern historians. Yet here, as so often in ancient history, the well-known dictum of Sir Ronald Syme comes in handy: "One uses what one has, and there is work to be done".[21] Bagnall's overall verdict was the modest claim that he had "lesser ambitions than either corroborating or undermining the model [of Scheidel, Chr.B.] as a whole", while offering "more in the direction of undermining it".[22] In general, Bagnall's contribution was much concerned with how to construe tables properly and how to present and interpret the statistical evidence, as well as with Scheidel's use of figures found in earlier research, which he simply reproduced "with no critical examination".[23] None of these features are unimportant, it seems to me.

A set of data that so far has not been used in the debate about the Antonine plague in Egypt concerns the reports of failed flooding of farmland by the Nile ('abrochia'). The material has been conveniently collected by Wolfgang Habermann and the almost 70 reports have the following chronological distribution:[24]

Minnen, 'P.Oxy LXVI 4527 and the Antonine plague in the Fayyum', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 135 (2001), 175–177.

[20] R.S. Bagnall, 'The effects of plague: model and evidence', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 15 (2002), 114–120; cf. n. 17 above. For the use of the Black Death and its aftermath as a model, see Scheidel 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 100–101, 109.

[21] R. Syme, *Roman Papers* II (Oxford 1979), 711. There is more material that can be put to use, though. One should note the remarkable fact that the all-encompassing statistical survey of the remaining papyrological material (some 35,000 texts) presented by W. Habermann, 'Zur chronologischen Verteilung der papyrologischen Zeugnisse', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 122 (1998), 144–160, has not played any role in the argument of those who propound dramatic consequences of the Antonine plague. Habermann presented the surviving sources from the 2nd century (p. 151–152): evidence from the Arsinoite nomes peaked in the 150s C.E.; in the 160s it returned to the level of the 140s. The material from all the other nomes peaks in the 110s, and is then roughly evenly spread until 200 C.E. Obviously a more detailed analysis of the material might be worth while.

[22] Bagnall 2002, op. cit. (n. 20), 114.

[23] Bagnall 2002, op. cit. (n. 20), 119.

[24] W. Habermann, 'Aspekte des Bewässerungswesens im kaiserzeitlichen Ägypten I: Die "Erklärungen für nicht überflutetes Land" (Abrochia-Deklarationen)', in K. Ruffing and B. Tenger (eds.), *Miscellanea oeconomica. Studien zur antiken Wirtschaftsgeschichte Harald Winkel*

Table 1: 'Abrochia'-reports from Egypt
(from Habermann 1997, op. cit. (n. 24))

Year	Number of Reports	Year	Number of Reports	Year	Number of Reports
158	1	190	4	208	2
163	4	195	3	209	2
164	11	201	1	212	1
168	5	202	4	219	2
169	2	203	2	224	1
170	2	204	5	226	1
171	1	206	1	240	2
				245	4

It is easy to discern a pattern here. The reign of Marcus Aurelius was exceptionally heavily affected according to the reports on uninundated farmland, while further concentrations appear in the early 190s and in the first five years of the 3rd century. It would surely be tempting to connect these reports to the Antonine plague and its sequels – on the grounds that the rampant plague would have prevented work on the dikes and other operations necessary for an even flooding – were it not for the fact that the first peak in our data comes already in 163–164 C.E. Since the plague as far as we know did not reach Egypt before 165 C.E., this removes the 'abrochia'-reports from the discussion, except for the fact that the difficulties in irrigating their farmland that Egyptian peasants experienced in the period 163–171 C.E. must surely be taken into account when debating the reason for changes in the Egyptian economy and population during those years.

The Black Death as a model for crisis

It is notable that Scheidel does in fact not connect the woes of Egypt (or Italy) to the 'third-century crisis', even though he postulates a 'lasting consequence' of the plague, in combination with later plagues under Commodus and in the third century.[25] He does, however, use the European Black Death from 1348 onwards as a model for the investigation of the Antonine plague in Egypt, and this comparative

zum 65. Geburtstag (Pharos IX, St. Katharinen 1997), 213–283, especially 223–226. In the presentation to follow I exclude a handful of reports that cannot be securely dated to a particular year.

[25] Scheidel 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 108.

perspective is a major aspect in all recent scholarship on the Antonine plague. As is well known, the effects of the Black Death were beneficial for those individuals who survived and for the following generations, insofar as real wages tended to rise. There was almost everywhere a lack of labourers, and thus wages rose quicker than prices (there was less demand – even if at first prices were high, when production broke down completely), while land rents decreased, as there were fewer peasants to work the land.[26]

Against this background of the Black Death model, one might even say that it is no surprise if no connection is made between the Antonine plague and the troubles of the third century, as the plague could be said simply to have carried out a necessary 'Malthusian' purge. The empire should have been expected to recover and rise, stronger than ever, as in the 1300s, when the plague struck not only once, but repeatedly and during a long period. Yet the Black Death and its sequels did not prevent the Italian Renaissance from taking hold, nor did it prevent the new ideas and modes of behaviour from spreading, or the Italian city-states such as Florence and Milan from growing to become some of the leading financial powers of the world (or even political and military ones).[27]

Now, while Scheidel's statistics from Egypt seem to adher to the expected outcome in many instances, he acknowledges that the model does not quite apply: *per capita* real income does not seem to have risen. This, it seems to me, again provides food for thought.[28]

Doubts about the seriousness of the Antonine plague

At this point we shall return to the plague in Italy and Rome, the heartland of the empire. Scheidel's 2002 article elicited two critical

[26] Brief resumes in, for example, Lo Cascio 1991, op. cit. (n. 15), 711–713; Scheidel 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 100. There are regional differences and the model has also been challenged, but the general trend seems clear enough, see J. Hatcher, 'England in the Aftermath of the Black Death', *Past & Present* 144 (1994), 3–35, especially 32–35.

[27] When students of the Black Death sometimes state that it took more than a century for Europe to return to the pre-plague conditions, they refer to population levels, not to standard of living or general economic strength.

[28] Scheidel 2002, op. cit. (n. 2), 109. Lo Cascio 1991, op. cit. (n. 15), 715–716, also provides some answers to why the scenario played out differently: in his view, the dominating role exercised by the upper classes, supported by the imperial government, prevented the masses from benefiting.

responses, one from James Greenberg of the University of Chicago,[29] and one from myself.[30] Greenberg used more statistical calculations and more sophisticated tables than Scheidel and Richard Duncan-Jones, the scholar whose work had inspired Scheidel's study, and argued that Scheidel's figures cannot be said to prove what they seem to show: namely, that the Antonine plague had such dire consequences during the succeeding decades. In addition, Greenberg and I both independently reached the conclusion that one cannot prove the effects of the plague by using such one-dimensional tools as Duncan-Jones and Scheidel had marshalled. The same holds true for some inscriptions that have received attention in the most recent past.[31]

However, Greenberg never asked one fundamental question: namely *how* Scheidel arrived at his figures in the first place. Accepting all the data presented by Scheidel, he fell victim to the 'power of numbers and statistics'. My own approach was in part different: ever the positivist, I looked at the primary data Scheidel used, which to be sure he had taken over from the work of other scholars (obviously fully acknowledging this). I believe I was able to show that the figures were often inaccurate, that the real numbers which can be derived from the sources present a rather different picture, and that as long as we use the method of Duncan-Jones and Scheidel in evaluating epigraphic evidence, we will be unable to prove that the plague had any dramatic negative effect in Rome and Italy.[32]

I should reiterate my firm belief that there was an outbreak of the plague in Italy after 165. Yet I do not think that we can take our late literary sources at face value when they claim that it was the worst ever or that the mortality was enormous.[33] More sophisticated and holistic methods must be devised for using the epigraphic evidence, which is

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[29] J. Greenberg, 'Plagued by doubt: reconsidering the impact of a mortality crisis in the 2nd c. A.D.', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 16 (2003), 413–425.

[30] C. Bruun, 'The Antonine plague in Rome and Ostia', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 16 (2003), 426–434.

[31] C.P. Jones, 'Ten dedications "To the gods and goddesses" and the Antonine Plague', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005), 293–301; *idem*, 'Addendum to *JRA* 18: Cosa and the Antonine plague?', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006), 368–369.

[32] Bruun 2003, op. cit. (n. 30), 427–434 (misinterpreted data); 434 (need for a holistic approach).

[33] *Historia Augusta, Vita Marci* 13.2, 21.6, Orosius, and Eutropius. See Greenberg 2003, op. cit. (n. 29), 423; he is right that Gilliam 1961, op. cit. (n. 34) already provided an exhaustive evaluation of these late sources, concluding that they cannot be trusted to be accurate.

certainly important, before we can be certain about the effect of the plague.

To my mind, Gilliam's cautious investigation into the value of the literary evidence on the plague is still the most valuable we have. He concluded that 1% to 2% of the population of the empire may have died in the 160s.[34] Duncan-Jones went over the same evidence again in 1996 in perhaps his most substantial contribution to this debate, reading much more into the same texts,[35] but his argument does not quite convince.

On the other hand, with so few data, there may be a temptation to forego the primary sources altogether and simply work with comparative models, be they demographic or economic. Models are obviously good to think with, but still I believe that ancient history stands or falls with its primary sources.

In what follows, I shall examine closely some of the evidence presented by Duncan-Jones and Scheidel for the serious effects of the plague in Italy, evidence that has not yet received the proper critical scrutiny.[36] My purpose here is partly methodological: to illustrate how allegedly authoritative numbers used in the debate about the Antonine plague really originated.

A case study: building inscriptions in Italy during the second century

Among the material presented by Duncan-Jones in 1996 (and then used by Scheidel in 2002) as proof of the ravaging of the Antonine plague were "Fig. 10 Italy: public buildings, A.D. 98–211 (non-imperial)", and "Fig. 11 Italy: imperially financed buildings, A.D. 98–211".[37]

The bar-graph in Fig. 10 shows a steady decline in inscriptions per year in the period following Antoninus Pius, i.e., through the reigns of Marcus, Commodus, and down to Severus, whose reign is the poorest

[34] J.F. Gilliam, 'The plague under Marcus Aurelius', *American Journal of Philology* 73 (1961) 225–252 = idem, *Roman army papers* (Amsterdam 1986), 227–253.

[35] R.P. Duncan-Jones, 'The impact of the Antonine plague', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9 (1996), 108–136.

[36] Greenberg 2003, op. cit. (n. 29), 417–418, examines the statistical presentation critically without addressing the question of how the data was collected. The topic found no space in my own Bruun 2003, op. cit. (n. 30).

[37] Duncan-Jones 1996, op. cit. (n. 35), 127. Statues were excluded, which have little value when discussing 'building inscriptions'.

in terms of surviving evidence. Fig. 11 shows a complete blank for the period 161–192, i.e., no imperially financed buildings were constructed in Italy under Marcus and Commodus. The absolute numbers can roughly be gauged from the bars in Duncan-Jones' graph but they are nowhere mentioned in the 1996 paper. One has to turn to Duncan-Jones' *Structure and Scale* (1990) for confirmation, and there one will find the following results:[38]

Table 2: Imperial and non-imperial building in Italy according to Duncan-Jones 1990, op. cit. (n. 38), 213

	Italy, building dedications only (non imperial)	Italy, building dedications only (emperors)
Trajan	4	4
Hadrian	11	10
Pius	15	7
Marcus	5	–
Commodus	2	–
Severus	1	3

Unfortunately not even Duncan-Jones gave references to the individual sources on which his bar-graph was based. There is a general reference to Hélène Jouffroy's work from 1986, which in some thirty pages records the evidence for public building in Italy during the second century up to the end of the reign of Commodus.[39]

A perusal of the substantial lists in Jouffroy's book raises a number of methodological questions. According to my calculation, she included some 130 buildings built or repaired in Italy from Trajan to Commodus,[40] while Duncan-Jones' table above contains only half of that, a mere 38 non-imperial and 24 imperially financed public buildings, which gives a total of 62 items for a period of over 110 years. Anyone wanting to reduplicate Duncan-Jones' survey of Jouffroy's data (which ideally should be possible) faces serious methodological problems, having

[38] See R.P. Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale in the Roman Imperial Economy* (Cambridge 1990), 213 Appendix 2 for the figures.

[39] Duncan-Jones 1990, op. cit. (n. 38), 62; H. Jouffroy, *La construction publique en Italie et dans l'Afrique romaine* (Strasbourg 1986), 109–140.

[40] I did not count buildings that were merely registered as having been in existence ("attesté").

for instance to decide whether or not to include entries of the following types presented by Jouffroy:

(1) "*Operae eius haec exstant… Caietae portus, Tarracinensis portus restitutio…* (Hist. Aug. Pius 8.2)" – where we only have a literary reference for building operations,
(2) "Volcei: *[…ex tes]tamento Otacili Galli patris Caesare[um vetustate] conlapsum p(ecunia) s(ua)…* (CIL X 415), IIe siècle" – which gives only a very general date,
(3) "Corfinium: *C. Alfius T.f. Maximus pecuniam legavit L. Herennio C.f. Rufo is aedem podium cryptae partem facienda curavit probavitq.*; CIL IX 3168, après 122" – where we only get a *terminus post quem*,
(4) "Mevania: vestiges d'un temple tétrastyle; Hadrien (C. Pietrangeli, *Mevania…*)" – where the information is derived solely from archaeological material.[41]

Duncan-Jones declared that the bars in his graph recorded 'building dedications', which patently means that only epigraphical evidence could be included.[42] Archaeological material such as (4) is consequently excluded, and so too presumably are literary sources such as (1), and evidence lacking a precise date. This essential information was lost in the transition and is no longer stated in the 1996 paper which only refers to 'public buildings' and 'imperially financed buildings', nor hence in Scheidel's 2002 article.

That leaves the question, how to deal with buildings that are not precisely dated to a particular reign by Jouffroy. While my survey turned up about ten non-imperial or imperial buildings dated under Marcus (against five listed by Duncan-Jones), there are another sixteen that are dated 'mid-second century', 'last third of the 2nd c.', 'third quarter of the 2nd c.', 'before 200', and so on. This is not the right place for an in-depth and properly footnoted survey of Jouffroy's data – which is in any case in part outdated (see next paragraph) and in part less than completely accurate[43] – but it is important to realize the limitations of the information that Duncan-Jones extracted from Jouffroy's lists.

[41] Jouffroy 1986, op. cit. (n. 39), 112 (1); 118 (2), (3) and (4).
[42] Duncan-Jones 1990, op. cit. (n. 38), 62.
[43] For instance, inscriptions on *fistulae* have not been dealt with in a coherent way. Why is *CIL* 11.3548a–b (Centumcellae) included (p. 113), but not, for example, *Imp. Hadrianus Pyrgensibus* (*Notizie degli scavi di antichità* (1960), 363) for Pyrgi. For a survey of all imperial *fistulae* in Italy see C. Bruun, 'Imperial Water Pipes in Roman Cities', in A.O. Koloski-Ostrow (ed.) *Water Use and Hydraulics in the Roman City* (Dubuque, Iowa

We are dealing with inscriptions only, and at that with 'dedications', a situation that seems to limit the material still further.[44]

In any case, as far as epigraphical evidence for imperial building activity in Italy is concerned, there is now the more recent work of Marietta Horster. Her clear and well documented study focuses on urban imperial building activities in Italian towns.[45] It is interesting to compare Horster's figures (supplemented with additions by Géza Alföldy) with those presented above. If we exclude Ostia (as did Duncan-Jones), and evidence from *fistulae*, Horster's work reveals some ninety imperial building projects in Italy dated to a particular reign (with some fifteen more of uncertain date). The figures look as follows:[46]

2001), 51–63. *CIL* 11.3793 = 6.1260 = *ILS* 290 refers to the Aqua Traiana which supplied the capital, not to a local aqueduct for Veji (p. 113).

[44] Nowhere in Duncan-Jones 1990, op. cit. (n. 38) is there a clarification of what is meant by a 'dedication'. It seems that a dedicatory formula *dedicatus/a/um* plus date and name was not required for a text to be counted by the author. Nor are readers made aware of what method was applied when a building was financed by an earlier emperor but dedicated by his successor.

[45] M. Horster, *Bauinschriften römischer Kaiser: Untersuchungen zu Inschriftenpraxis und Bautätigkeit in Städten des westlichen Imperium Romanum in der Zeit des Prinzipats* (Stuttgart 2001). As seen from the title, the study focuses on towns. Milestones are therefore excluded, and inscriptions relating to roadworks, including bridges, have apparently not been systematically studied, see 12, 296, 315 n. 299 (*CIL* 11.6622). Precisations and additions were supplied by G. Alföldy, *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 15 (2002), 489–498 (reviewing Horster 2001), and idem, 'Zu kaiserzeitliche Bauinschriften aus Italien', *Epigraphica* 64 (2002) 113–145.

[46] The following list retains the order in which the inscriptions are mentioned in Horster 2001, op. cit. (n. 45), 253–341, separately for each emperor (Ostia is excluded in order to create a better comparison with Duncan-Jones). Some inscriptions were added based on suggestions made by Alföldy (see the previous note), and some inscriptions which Horster did not include in her list of urban building inscriptions proper (pp. 76–96) have been included, because they do refer to some kind of public work (such as bridges). Augustus: *CIL* 10.1617, 10.4749, 9.540*, 11.6218, 11.5266; *AE* 1991, no.666; *CIL* 11.720, 5.5027, 5.3325; Tiberius: *CIL* 11.3783, 11.3784, 5.4307, 5.6358; Caligula: *CIL* 11.720; Claudius: *CIL* 11.5; *AE* 1991, no. 666?; Galba: *CIL* 11.6187; Vespasian: *CIL* 14.3485, 10.1406; *AE* 1979, no. 170; *CIL* 10.1629, 11.5166, 11.3734, 11.598, 5.4212; Titus: *CIL* 10.1481 = *IG* 14.729; *AE* 1994, no. 413; *CIL* 10.1630; *AE* 1951, no. 200, *AE* 1902, no. 40; Domitian: *AE* 1994, no. 404; *EE* 9.609; *CIL* 11.368; Trajan: *CIL* 9.5746; *AE* 1987, no. 353; *CIL* 5.854, 9.4515; Hadrian: *CIL* 10.6652, 14.2216, 15.2460, 10.5649, 14.2797; *AE* 1982, no. 142a; *CIL* 14.2798 ?; *NSA* 1907, 127+658 f.; *AE* 1976, no. 114; *CIL* 10.5963, 10.4574, 10.3832, 10.463*, 9.4116, 9.5681, 9.5294, 9.5353, 11.5668, 11.6115, 11.6001, 11.5988; *AE* 1984, no. 390; *AE* 1946, no. 222, *AE* 1991, no. 694, *CIL* 5.2152; Antoninus Pius: *CIL* 10.3832, 10.3831, 10.1640–41, 10.103; *EE* 8.204; *CIL* 9.5353; *AE* 1984, no. 390; *CIL* 11.1425, 11.3363; Marcus: *CIL* 11.371; Commodus: *CIL* 10.6654?, 11.1665; Septimius Severus: *CIL* 10.5909; *AE* 1982, no. 153; *IGItal.* 1.22; Caracalla: *CIL* 11.2166?; 9.4960; *AE* 1968, no. 157. S. Segenni, 'Antonino Pio e le città dell'Italia (Riflessioni su *H.A.*, *v. Pii*, 8,4)',

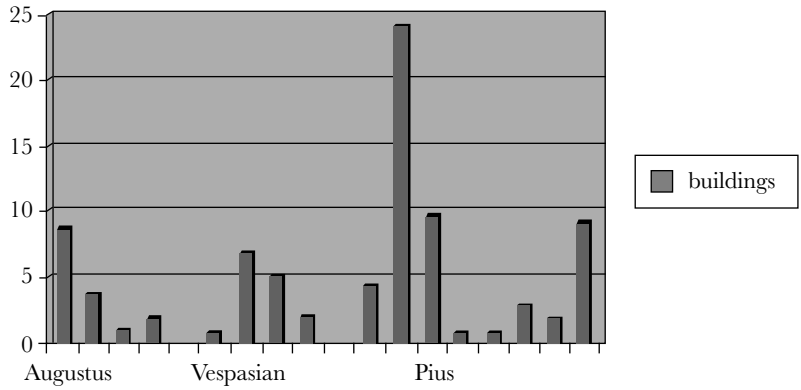

Fig. 1: Imperial building projects in Italy: Augustus (9) – Tiberius (4) – Gaius (1) – Claudius (2) – Nero – Galba (1) – Vespasian (8) – Titus (5) – Domitian (3) – Nerva – Trajan (4) – Hadrian (24 + 1?) – Pius (9) – Marcus (1) – Commodus (1 + 1?) – Septimius Severus (3) – Caracalla (2 + 1?) – Individual emperors from Severus Alexander to Aurelianus (9 + 1?).

As is evident, Horster's research presents some differences compared to Duncan-Jones' table, but again the quantity of the material is not very large. The one outstanding feature is the enormous activity under Hadrian (some 30% of all the dated projects belong to his reign), but otherwise the material lends itself to a number of different conclusions, depending on the pattern one wants to see and the periods one construes. For example, one might wonder at the exiguous number of projects in the later Julio-Claudian period (only two in over thirty years after A.D. 37), at the record activity under Vespasian and Titus (at least thirteen projects in twelve years), at the passivity during the following almost four decades (only seven projects from 81 to 117), and so on. But of course these observations are arbitrary and different periodizations would produce different impressions; my point is to underline the fragility of this kind of proof by statistics. And here I will not even go into the question of the 'epigraphic habit', imperial self-glorification, *damnatio memoriae* and other essential factors that influence the composition of the epigraphic record. However, the dearth of projects under Marcus is still quite noteworthy, and the difference compared to his

Athenaeum 89 (2001), 355–405 contains a fuller survey of Pius's activities. That emperor in several cases (merely) dedicated what Hadrian had begun.

predecessor cannot be denied, although Pius in many cases had the advantage of finishing projects that Hadrian had begun.[47]

Some observations by Horster are important in this context. The concept of 'Sättigung an Gebäuden', i.e. the possibility that local needs had already been satisfied, should not be forgotten when explaining fluctuations in public building.[48] Public building is certainly not always driven by rational causes, but after the surge under Hadrian the needs may have been less pressing (even though, ideally, repair works ought surely to have been undertaken in the 160s–170s on buildings erected under Hadrian or before). More importantly, Horster reaches the conclusion that no conscious imperial building policy can be discerned in Italy. The emperors mostly reacted to special needs of one kind or another.[49] Therefore, if Marcus' attention was taken up by his wars, as it surely was, it is only to be expected that there should be less public building in Italy sponsored by imperial funds.

To sum up so far: The information we have about the Antonine plague does not warrant the conclusion that it was of such a magnitude that by itself it would have had catastrophic consequences for the Roman world. There were other factors, though, that created problems for the empire: foreign enemies and long-term social and economic developments, for instance. The Antonine plague on its own cannot explain the 'third-century crisis', of whatever nature it was.

The plague and the debate about slavery in Italy

There is a further question for which the Antonine plague is also allegedly quite important. The research of Elio Lo Cascio has tied the plague to a specific aspect of the 'third century crisis' – the fate of slavery in Italy.

Scholars interested in determining the population of ancient Italy are engaged in two related debates which concern the overall population of

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[47] See *CIL* 9.5353, 10.1640, 3832; *AE* 1984, no. 390.

[48] Horster 2001, op. cit. (n. 45), 243. This possible explanation for a decrease in inscriptions was mentioned, although not advocated, for North Africa by E. Fentress, 'African Building: Money, Politics and Crisis in Auzia', in A. King and M. Henig (eds.), *The Roman West in the Third Century. Contributions from Archaeology and History* (Oxford 1981), 199–210, especially 199 f., where other possible explanations are mentioned as well.

[49] Horster 2001, op. cit. (n. 45), 248–250; supported by Alföldy 2002, op. cit. (n. 45), 491–492.

Italy and the slave population of Italy (and the whole empire). Details concerning the debate are presented elsewhere in the volume; suffice it to say here that a crucial question is how to interpret the Augustan census figures, around 4 million in 28 B.C.E. and 4.9 million in 14 C.E.[50] This represents an astonishing growth since 70 B.C.E. (910,000). No demographic model can account for such an enormous growth by natural means. Is it therefore the case that the Augustan figures include women and children? Many scholars are of that opinion. Lo Cascio considers such a proposition impossible, with some good arguments, explaining the higher figures as the product of a more efficient census and new grants of citizenship.[51]

The high population estimate for imperial Italy proposed by Lo Cascio, some 12 million, has a certain relevance for another lively current debate, the one about the number of slaves in the Roman world. Prominent participants in this debate include Walter Scheidel and William Harris. Scheidel argues that slave breeding was the only way in which the slave population could have maintained itself demographically during the empire, when slaves may have constituted 10% of the population. Harris argues that for keeping the numbers of slaves stable other sources of supply were important and probably equally important as breeding: in particular infant-exposure, but also import across the borders, piracy, and so on. His estimate of the slave population is closer to 15%–20% of the total.[52]

There are many uncertainties in these calculations and no model is completely satisfactory, as Lo Cascio showed in a paper published in 2002 in which he solved the problem of the apparently too high proportion of slaves by arguing that the total population of the Roman

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[50] P.A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.–A.D. 14* (Oxford 1971), 13–14.

[51] E. Lo Cascio, 'Il *census* a Roma e la sua evoluzione dall'età "serviana" alla prima età imperiale', *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome (Antiquités)* 113 (2001), 565–603, especially 591–592; more in detail E. Lo Cascio, 'The Size of the Roman population: Beloch and the Meaning of the Augustan Census Figures', *Journal of Roman Studies* 84 (1994), 23–40, especially 32: women and children were included in the provincial *census*, but they were taxpayers, unlike the situation in Italy. It is thought that in Italy all those who were *sui iuris* declared the women and children under their authority, but that does not mean that they were included in the count. The first provincial census (which some think influenced Roman practice) was not until 27 B.C.E. Lo Cascio's figures are supported by G. Kron, 'The Augustan Census Figures and the Population of Italy', *Athenaeum* 93 (2005), 441–495.

[52] W. Scheidel, 'Quantifying the Sources of Slaves in the Roman Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies* 87 (1997), 159–169; W.V. Harris, 'Demography, Geography and the Sources of Roman Slaves', *Journal of Roman Studies* 89 (1999), 62–75.

Empire was in fact higher.[53] If scholars assume six million slaves under Marcus Aurelius, against 54 million free individuals,[54] then it may well be that the pool from which to recruit enough slaves to keep the servile population stable was not large enough. By assuming, however, that the free population was considerably larger, for instance comprising some twelve million in Italy alone, six million slaves in the empire at large will make up a much smaller group as a percentage of the total population, and the pool from which to recruit new slaves (foundlings, victims of kidnapping, etc.) is hence concomitantly larger.[55] As is evident, this is no *ad hoc* solution by Lo Cascio; it derives directly from his view on the size of the citizen body and the Italian population under Augustus and the succeeding dynasties.

Assuming a larger total population of the Roman world than some other scholars do is certainly one way of solving the problem with the stability of the slave population. It is a solution which also interestingly assigns less importance to slave labour during the first two centuries C.E. than is customary.

But one problem, it seems to me, is that the high population figures have to come down eventually. I doubt that one can argue for such a large overall population of the Roman world in the later 2nd century and during the difficult years of the 3rd century. In order for Lo Cascio's model to make sense, the numbers must decline, and this is where the Antonine plague is important. The plague provides a logical reason for why the large population of the first century B.C.E. is much reduced some two centuries later.[56]

Here I come back to my conclusion in the previous section: what if, after all, one cannot show that the Antonine plague had such catastrophic consequences (including demographic ones) as is commonly assumed? If so, the 'high population model' may have to be revisited,

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[53] E. Lo Cascio, 'Considerazioni sul numero e sulle fonti di approvigionamento degli schiavi in età imperiale', in W. Sudor (ed.), *Études de demographie du monde gréco-romain* (Wroclaw 2002), 51–65.

[54] Frier 2000, op. cit. (n. 16), 814 suggests a total population of 61.4 million in 164 C.E.

[55] Lo Cascio 2002, op. cit. (n. 53), 63; see *idem*, 'Il rapporto uomini-terra nel paesaggio dell'Italia romana', *Index* 32 (2003), 1–15, especially 9–10 for the figure of twelve million.

[56] See Lo Cascio 2002, op. cit. (n. 53), 6: "A risolvere drasticamente il problema interviene, negli anni '60, la pestilenza".

and, as a consequence, it becomes more difficult to argue for quite as large a population of slaves in Roman society as is sometimes done.

The Antonine plague indeed represents a crucial question at the intersection of debates about the 'third-century' crisis, the Roman population, and even the size of the slave population.

Toronto, October 2006

THE LATE REPUBLICAN WEST: IMPERIAL TAXATION IN THE MAKING?

Tony Ñaco Del Hoyo

The acquisition of the Roman world in the West had begun long before the Civil Wars (49–31 B.C.). With a few exceptions, the new territories were not taxed on a regular basis.[1] Since the Roman expansion throughout Italy, and until the Republic was definitively over, war and conquest managed to sustain the state finances. Hence, in order to pay for their campaigns against each other, the Late Republican dynasts were eager to confiscate the properties of defeated political rivals, milk the state treasury, resume the collection of abolished taxes in Italy and Rome, and even plunder the provinces for their own sake.[2] Of course, the next step in Rome's world domination was to collect permanent contributions from their provincial subjects, whose submission should be guaranteed by regular taxation. In the early decades of the Principate Velleius reported his intention "to give a brief synopsis of the races and nations which were reduced to provinces and made tributary to Rome".[3] This paper wants to study this long-term phenomenon focusing on Sicilia and Hispaniae down to the end of the Republican régime.

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[2] P.M. Martin, 'L'éthique de la conquête: un enjeu dans le débat entre *optimates* et *populares*', in M.Sordi (ed.) *Il pensiero sulla guerra nel mondo antico* (Milan 2001), 141–171.

[3] Velleius Paterculus 2.38.1: *Gens ac natio redacta in formulam provinciae stipendiaria facta*. See C. Nicolet, *Tributum. Recherches sur la fiscalité directe sous la République* (Bonn 1976), 2, n. 2; T. Ñaco del Hoyo, *Vectigal Incertum. Economía de guerra y fiscalidad republicana en el Occidente mediterráneo: su impacto en el territorio (218–133 a.C.)* (Oxford 2003), 25–77; J. France, '*Tributum* et *stipendium*. La politique fiscale de l'empereur romain', *Revue Historique de Droit Français et Étranger* 84.1 (2006), 1–16.

Patrocinium orbis terrae

In book one of his *Histories*, written around the mid second century B.C., Polybius stated that one of the clues behind writing his historical work was "asking by what counsel and trusting to what power and resources the Romans embarked on that enterprise which has made them lords over land and sea in our part of the world".[4] It has been often pointed out that the intellectual circles of Rome's upper classes may have started to think in terms of world domination, particularly after the Roman victory at Zama.[5] Nevertheless, a real change in Roman attitudes towards material and human resources from defeated enemies could also be seen during the last century of the Republic. The progressive assimilation of new lands and peoples made Rome believe not only in its own military supremacy as shown in the battle field, but also in its moral supremacy. What gradually developed as well, was a need for regular income from the provinces.[6] Rome believed it deserved the leadership it was being offered and, accordingly, wanted to make direct profits from it. In his *De Officiis* Cicero, writing a century later than Polybius, claimed this moral dimension in Rome's 'protectorate' of the whole world (*patrocinium orbis terrae*).[7]

In a well-known letter sent to his brother Quintus, who was governor of Asia in the late sixties of the first century B.C., Cicero directly related

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[4] Polybius 1.3.10. Translation by W.R.Paton (all translations will be those of Loeb editions). See also F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius III* (Oxford 1979), 44.

[5] See C. Nicolet, *La mémoire perdue. À la recherche des archives oubliées, publiques et privées, de la Rome antique* (Paris 1994), especially 149–172, 'Documents fiscaux et géographie dans la Rome ancienne'; F. Stok, '*Caput mundi*. Roma nella coscienza geografica dei Romani', in F. Giordano (ed.), *L'idea di Roma nella cultura antica* (Napoli 2001), 277–296; M. De Nardis, '*Forma*: aspetti della percezione dello spazio geografico-politico a Roma tra I sec. a.C. e I sec. d.C.', in A. Storchi Marino (ed.), *Economia, amministrazione e fiscalità nel mondo romano* (Bari 2005), 133–162; H. Sidebottom, 'Roman Imperialism: the changed outward trajectory of the Roman Empire', *Historia* 54.3 (2005), 315–330.

[6] J. France, 'Remarques sur les *tributa* dans les provinces nord-occidentales du Haut-Empire romain (Brétagne, Gaules, Germanies)', *Latomus* 60.2 (2001), 359–379; T. Ñaco del Hoyo, '*Vectigal incertum*: guerra y fiscalidad republicana en el siglo II a.C.', *Klio* 87.2 (2005), 366–395.

[7] Cicero, *De Officiis* 2.27. See J.S. Richardson, '*Imperium Romanum* between Republic and Empire', in L. de Blois, et al. (eds.), *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power*.Impact of Empire 3 (Amsterdam 2003), 137–147. Another illustrative example of such ideology may be found in an image of the earth surrounded by objects representing Rome's power on the reverse of several *denarii*, like the one dated in mid-seventies B.C. and coined in Hispania during the Sertorian War (*RRC* 393/1B).

the *vectigalia* Rome needed from the *externa* to the peace the provincials obtained after conquest.[8] But what was happening in Asia may hardly be compared to the scarce results, in terms of war spoils and regular income, acquired by Quintus himself, who happened to be an army officer during the Caesarian campaign in Britannia in 55–54 B.C.[9] This letter to Atticus reports disappointing news on the Roman experience in Britain, in clear contrast with Caesar's own words describing an attempt to fix regular taxation (*annuum vectigal*) on the natives, even though his armies probably did not remain on the island sufficiently for such measures to be implemented: "he made requisition of hostages, and determined what tribute Britain should pay yearly to Rome".[10]

Republican Provincial Taxation

"When in the year 167 B.C., the tribute was taken off Italy, the expenses of administration and public works were undisguisedly supported by the taxation of the provinces".[11] That is what William Thomas Arnold wrote in his book on 'Roman Provincial Administration' in 1914, and which most ancient historians have followed ever since.[12] After all, for Plutarch and other writers there was a relation between the huge display of wealth in Aemilius Paulus' triumph over the Macedonians and the abolition of the citizen tax, the so-called *tributum ex censu*. This extraordinary tax had been collected among Roman citizens in order to sustain the extraordinary war effort made by the state since the early fourth century B.C., and was briefly reinstated for financial reasons in

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[8] Cicero, *Epistulae ad Quintum fratrem* 1.1.34: *Id autem imperium cum retineri sine vectigalibus nullo modo possit, aequo animo parte aliqua suorum fructum pacem sibi sempiternam redimat atque otium*. France 2006, op. cit. (n. 3), 6.

[9] Cicero, *Epistulae ad Atticum* 4.17.6.

[10] Caesar, *De Bello Gallico* 5.22.4: *Obsides imperat et quid in annos singulos vectigalis populo romano britannia penderet*. S. James, 'Romanisation and the peoples of Britain', in S. Keay and N. Terrenato (eds.), *Italy and the West. Comparative Issues in Romanization* (Oxford 2001), 187–209, especially 193 ff.; T. Ñaco del Hoyo, 'El sinuoso vocabulario de la dominación: *anuum vectigal* y la terminología fiscal republicana', *Latomus* 62.2 (2003), 290–306, especially 299–303.

[11] W.T. Arnold, *The Roman System of Provincial Administration to the Accession of Constantine the Great* (Roma 1968³), 194.

[12] Cf P. Cerami, *Aspetti e problemi di diritto finanziario romano* (Palermo 1997), 59 ff.

43 B.C.[13] There is, however, hardly any evidence to support that "the taxation of the provinces", in Arnold's own words, was eventually organised on a regular basis after Macedon's fall, nor of its relation with the Senate's decision of taking up the suspension of *tributum* one year later. After all, some seventy years ago Tenney Frank clearly showed (if his gross figures are to be trusted) how the financial load of the citizen tax was only 10% of the whole state income. This clearly means that this figure, too low to be significant in general terms, might easily have been compensated by any other source of wealth, not necessarily regular.[14] In my view, Arnold's interpretation on overseas taxation does not correspond to the evolution of events in provincial administration up to the final crisis of the Republic.[15]

A rather controversial passage has traditionally been claimed as a sort of 'road map' for Republican taxation. In his speech against Verres, whilst addressing the subject of land revenues from all the provinces (*agrorum vectigalia*), Cicero highlights the difference between Asia and Sicily on the one hand, and the rest of the provinces on the other. Whereas in the former the censors leased out contracts for several tithes to be collected, the contribution for latter, particularly Hispania and Africa, was organised differently. Cicero then mentions a land tax not related to the crop size. Accordingly, such *vectigal certum* had its origin in the submissive and inferior status – *stipendiarius* – of those Sicilian towns formerly defeated at war.[16] When he wrote his third speech, called *De Frumento*, Cicero focused his attention on several accusations of corruption against the former governor and his deputies in the management of the Sicilian tax system which, as is well known, relied mostly on land revenues. In other words, Cicero was primarily committed to give a

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[13] Plutarch, *Aemilius Paulus* 38.1; Cicero, *De Officiis* 2.21.74; Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 33.56; Valerius Maximus 4.3.8. Nicolet, 1976 op. cit. (n. 3), 79 ff.; France 2006 op. cit. (n. 3), 3–5.

[14] T. Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome I. Rome and Italy of the Republic* (Baltimore 1933), 139–141; R. Kallet-Marx, *Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.* (Berkeley, LosAngeles and Oxford 1995), 64–65; Ñaco 2003, op. cit. (n. 3), 78–84.

[15] T. Spagnuolo Vigorita and F. Mercogliano, 'Tributi (dir.rom.)', *Enciclopedia del Diritto* 27 (1992), 85–105; Ñaco 2003, op.cit (n. 3), 85–126; Ñaco 2005, op. cit. (n. 6), 381 ff.

[16] Cicero, 2 *In Verrem* 3.6.12: *Inter Siciliam ceterasque provincias, iudices, in agrorum vectigalium ratione hoc interest, quod ceteris aut impositum vectigal est certum, quod stipendiarium dicitur, ut Hispanis et plerisque Poenorum quasi victoriae praemium ac poena belli, aut censoria locatio constituta est, ut Asiae lege Sempronia*. See J. Marquardt, *De l'organisation financière chez les Romains* (Paris 1888), 232–235; France 2006, (n. 3), 5–7.

thorough description of how land taxes were collected in Sicily around 70 B.C. Mario Genovese rightly pointed out in 1993 that Cicero was hardly interested in giving us a clue of a so-called *stipendium*. It was actually never mentioned in the text in such form, that is, not linked to land revenues. In sum, it is difficult to find evidence supporting the notice that the Ciceronian *vectigal certum (…) stipendiarium* ought to be considered a land tax.[17] Late Republican funding needs meant a substantial increase in looting, war indemnities, casual levies, temporary garrisoning, billeting and submission of auxiliaries and hostages, at least in those regions where the fighting was still active.[18] Furthermore, tax-pressure on the provincial contributors whose regular taxes had already been organised and collected, sometimes adapting already existing financial structures, eventually grew in even greater proportions.[19] At this stage, Gaius Gracchus' law on Asia (123 B.C.), which leased out revenue contracts to private investors, certainly became a crucial starting point in Rome's attempt to intervene more efficiently in the management of provincial resources. Although the massive cereal production in Asia might be compared to that of Sicily or Africa, the real object of the Gracchan law, as P. Erdkamp has recently suggested, was to get cash for the treasury instead of cereal and other goods previously supplied by these provinces.[20] On this occasion, the money was provided by solvent Italian or Roman middle men, who advanced sums directly to Rome, purchasing the Asian contracts with the perspective of huge profits in promising wealthy land.[21] In the West, regular tax-payers in Sicily and

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[17] M. Genovese, 'Condizioni delle *civitates* della Sicilia ed assetti amministrativo-contributivi delle altre province nella prospettazione ciceroniana delle Verrine', *Iura* 44 (1993), 171–243, esp. 174–188; Ñaco 2003 op. cit. (n. 3), 241–248.

[18] Livius 28.34.7; Caesar, *Bellum Civile* 3.31–32; T. Ñaco 'Rearguard strategies of Roman Republican Warfare in the Far West', in T. Ñaco and I. Arrayás (eds.), *War and Territory in the Roman World / Guerra y territorio en el mundo romano* (Oxford 2006), 149–167.

[19] J. Muñiz Coello, 'César y la *eisphora* de Asia. *Bellum Civile* 3.32', *Ancient History Bulletin* (forthcoming).

[20] P. Erdkamp, *Hunger and the sword. Warfare and Food Supply in Roman Republican Wars 264–30 B.C.* (Amsterdam 1998), 111 and 119–120; F. López-Sánchez, 'Moneda ibérica y *hospitium*', *XIII International Congress of Numismatics. Madrid September 2003*, vol. I (Madrid 2005), 511–515, have underlined the substantial role played by local coins in the payment of native auxiliaries in *Hispaniae*, revealing that the Republican war effort did not always fall on Roman issues.

[21] G. Merola, *Autonomia locale e governo imperiale. Fiscalità e amministrazione nelle province asiane* (Bari 2001), 34 ff.; L. De Ligt, 'Direct Taxation in Western Asia Minor', in L. De Ligt, E.A. Hemelrijk and H.W. Singor (eds.), *Roman Rule and Civic Life: Local and Regional Perspectives*. Impact of Empire 4 (Amsterdam 2004), 77–93, especially 91.

Africa continued to contribute mostly in cereal, but Roman provincial authorities also requested even more commuted money *in lieu.*[22]

Financial crisis, provincial resources, and civil wars

Once the Late Republican leaders started fighting each other, the provinces became a primary military target as an ultimate resort to obtain money and supplies to sustain their armies, particularly if they were not in a position to benefit from the state treasury in Rome. First and most importantly, it became a realistic option to billet their legions in peregrine towns and exact wealth and goods from the provincials, no matter what their actual fiscal status was from a Roman perspective.[23] So far down to the outbreak of the civil wars, Sicily, Africa, Asia, Macedonia or even Cilicia and Judea had already contributed regularly to the *aerarium* with direct and indirect taxes, in corn and other supplies.[24] The continuous state of war, however, made it difficult to retain their production and taxing rates. Roman and Italian *societates publicanorum* were actively doing business in the East, in particular dealing with tithes and *vectigalia* from Asia.[25] Local *decumani*, however, collected land taxes, *portorium* and *scriptura* from the Sicilian tax-payers, probably from the early or mid-second century B.C.[26] Extra tithes were paid by some Sardinian towns only when Rome or its armies needed supplementary corn supplies.[27] In contrast, some time before Caesar's intervention, the

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[22] C. Nicolet, 'Dîmes de Sicile, d'Asie et d'ailleurs', *Censeurs et publicains. Économie et fiscalité dans la Rome antique* (Paris 2000), 277–293, 437–440.

[23] In 49 B.C., Scipio Nasica, one of Pompey's generals, set up provisory camps in Cilicia ordering his *praefecti* to make exactions, demand auxiliaries and billeting rights from the nearby towns (Caesar, *Bellum Civile* 3.31–32). See also Ñaco 2005, op. cit. (n. 6), 382–384.

[24] After Pompey's organisation in the sixties in the Greek East and Caesar's arrangements in Judea and Asia: Kallet-Marx 1995 op. cit. (n. 14), 323–334; Merola 2001, op. cit. (n. 21), 61 ff.; Curran, 'The long hesitation: some reflections on the Romans in Judaea', *Greece & Rome* 52.1 (2005), 70–98, especially 76–77; M.A. Speidel, 'Early Roman Rule in Commagene', *Scripta Classica Israelica* 24 (2005), 85–100, especially 86–88. Taxes on house-building (*ostiaria* and *columnaria*) were adapted from the former taxation on the Cilicians (Cicero, *Epistulae ad Atticum* 5.16.2): Muñiz forthcoming, op. cit. (n. 19).

[25] M. Cottier, 'La ferme des douanes en Orient et la *lex portorii Asiae*', in J.-J. Aubert (ed.), *Tâches publiques et entreprise privée dans le monde romain* (Neuchâtel 2003), 215–228; De Ligt, Hemelrijk and Singor 2004, op. cit. (n. 21), 77–93.

[26] Ñaco 2003, op. cit. (n. 3).

[27] Erdkamp 1998 op. cit. (n. 20), 84 ff.; Ñaco 2003 op. cit. (n. 3), 95–105.

provincial authorities in Africa might have conducted a direct collection of land and poll taxes from the old Carthaginian *stipendiarii*, who lived in *pagi* after Carthage's final falldown in 146 B.C.[28] Pliny the Elder reports that Cyrene was perhaps already paying a tax in *silphium* in the Late Republic.[29] On the other hand, *portoria* have been traced in Narbonensis as early as M. Fonteius' praetorship in the seventies, although not much evidence has survived until the Augustan Principate.[30] Also in Gaul, an annual contribution of 40 million sesterces imposed after Caesar's conquest, and only reported by Suetonius, hardly qualifies as regular taxation.[31]

After Caesar's assassination, the state finances suffered from even more pressure than before. Brutus and Cassius looked for refuge in the Eastern provinces as long as Pompey's sons remained active in Sicily, withholding their enormous wealth in taxes and provisions from the Senate's control.[32] Mark Antony and Octavian knew that their main source of taxation was being seriously compromised, foreseeing a significant loss of income and supplies for their armies. Therefore, from 43 B.C. onwards, extraordinary levies and taxes were arranged in order to compensate for the huge rise in war effort expenses of the Republic. In Claude Nicolet's words, those extraordinary contributions were not real "fiscalité" but only "exactions", provisory measures hardly destined to survive the conflict itself. Proscriptions to senators and knights, forced loans and "corvées" from the provincials, taxes and new rents for senators in possession of property and houses in the city over 100,000 *denarii*, or revenues on purchases of slaves and other sales were all instructed.[33] Both Plutarch and Dio Cassius report how the old *tributum ex censu* was reinstated in the form of a certain percentage of the property of the Roman citizens: "and since there was need of

[28] Ñaco 2003 op. cit. (n. 3), 105–114; J.C. Quinn, 'The role of the 146 settlement in the provincialization of Africa', in *L'Africa romana. Ai confini dell'Impero: contatti, scambi, conflitti* (Tozeur 2004), 1593–1602.

[29] Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 19.40.

[30] J. France, *Quadragesima Galliarum.L'organisation douanière des provinces alpestres, gauloises et germaniques de l'Empire Romain. Ier siècle avant J.-C. – III siècle après J.-C.* (Rome 2001), 222, 238.

[31] Suetonius, *Divus Iulius* 25.

[32] K. Verboven, '54–44 B.C.E.: financial or monetary crisis?', in E. Lo Cascio (ed.), *Credito e moneta del mondo romano. Atti degli Incontri capresi di storia dell'economia antica. Capri 12–14 ottobre 2000* (Bari 2003), 49–68, especially 54–55.

[33] Appian, *Bellum Civile* 4.34.

much money for the war, they all contributed the twenty-fifth part of the wealth they possessed".[34]

In his private correspondence, Cicero wrote that the Senate had no other choice but to reintroduce the citizen tax, in order to face the huge challenge caused by the assassins to the Republic.[35] Politically, however, the writer acknowledged how damaging all these events might be for any politician taking similar decisions. In his famous speech against Mark Antony, Cicero not only blamed the triumvir for having spent the money left by Caesar in the temple of Ops, but also for overtaxing the Roman citizens.[36] Moreover, the extreme pressure suffered by the Roman provincial administration down to the civil wars, pouring incidental as much as regular resources from the 'external world' on to Republican politicians, actually served as a starting point for an 'imperial' taxation. Founded on the *civitas* as the ultimate resort of tax collection, this new system could not be succesfully launched throughout the Empire, while the Republican dynasts were still fighting each other.[37]

Sicilia

The Ciceronian speeches against Verres provide most of the available information on the taxes collected by the Republic in Sicily from probably the early or mid-second century B.C.[38] Nevertheless, it is rather

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[34] Dio Cassius 46.31.3, ἐπειδή τε πολλῶν χρημάτων ἐς τὸν πόλεμον ἐδέοντο, πάντες μὲν τὸ πέμπτον καὶ εἰκοστὸν τῆς ὑπαρχούσης σφίσιν οὐσίας ἐπέδωκαν. Cf. also Plutarch, *Aemilius Paulus* 38.1.

[35] Cicero *Epistulae ad Familiares* 12.30; *Epistulae ad Brutum* 1.18.5. Nicolet 1976, op. cit. (n. 3), 87–98; France 2006, op. cit. (n. 3), 12–13.

[36] Cicero *Philippica* 2.93; E. Frezouls, 'La fiscalité de la République au Principat: continuité et rupture' *Klema* 11 (1986), 17–28; Nicolet 1976, op. cit. (n. 3), 88; Spagnuolo-Mercogliano 1992, op. cit. (n. 15), 95–98.

[37] E. Lo Cascio, 'La struttura fiscale dell'Impero Romano', *Il Princeps e il suo impero. Studi di storia amministrativa e finanziaria romana* (Bari 2000), 177–203; I. Sastre, '*Ager publicus* y *deditio*: reflexiones sobre los procesos de provincialización', in M. Garrido-Hory and A. Gonzales (eds.) *Histoire, espaces et marges de l'Antiquité. Hommages à Monique Clavel-Lévêque II* (Paris 2003), 157–192.

[38] A basic tithe of the harvest was collected by local *publicani* from most of the Sicilian tax-payers: *civitates decumanae*. A small group of towns, whose hinterlands included portions of *ager publicus populi romani* leased out by the censors, also paid an extra rent. Forced purchases as a second tithe (*frumentum emptum*) and a third one, on this occasion commuted for money *in lieu* (*frumentum aestimatum*), were also required (Cicero, 2 *In Verrem* 3.5.12). Finally, indirect revenues like custom dues (*portorium*) and grazing-tax (*scriptura*) were also collected. See recently: C. Gebbia, 'Cicerone e l'*utilitas*

difficult to recover the full scope of the tax-system on the island after 70 B.C. During the Civil Wars, Sicily remained mostly peaceful until Sextus Pompey intervened against Caesar's heirs, although the Sicilian towns probably suffered from overtaxation whilst Roman finances were under extreme pressure.[39] There has been much discussion about the virtual end of the tithe system, and its immediate replacement by a direct tax in money, usually called *stipendium*. As has been pointed out, similar changes may have been introduced by Caesar into Asia,[40] but the actual evidence for Sicily is rather inconclusive as to a *vectigal certum* before the Principate.[41]

When Caesar granted Latin or Roman citizenship to some Sicilian towns, the entire provincial tax-system might have been affected, because such immunity ought to have been compensated by the rest of the tax-payers. Despite the increasing needs of supplies for the army and the city of Rome, mainly delivered from Sicily, cash was probably an even more urgent need for the state treasury in times of war than corn, and the wealthy Sicilian towns surely complied with such requirements. In 36 B.C., after several years of Sextus Pompey's strong control over the island, Appian reports how Octavian made a severe requisition of 1600 talents. Surprisingly, it was not paid in corn but in money, after promising a gift of 500 drachmae to his own soldiers.[42] What lies behind the story is probably an increasing interest in holding money instead of corn, either directly exacted from the taxpayers or, even better, indirectly commuted into coin (*adaeratio*) from the corn production brought to the market. That seemed to be the case when Octavian and Sextus were about to break their agreements in 39 B.C.:

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provinciae Sicilia', *Kokalos* 45 (2003), 27–40; Ñaco 2003 op. cit. (n. 3), 86–95; A. Pinzone, 'Ancora in tema di *ager publicus* siciliano in età ciceroniana', in G. Fiorentini et al. (eds.), *Archeologia del mediterraneo. Studi in onore di Ernesto de Miro* (Roma 2003), 545–551.

[39] E. Gabba, 'La Sicilia romana', in M.H. Crawford (ed.), *L'Impero Romano e le strutture economiche e sociali delle province* (Como 1986), 71–85, especially 76 ff. Pompey himself had exacted weapons and iron from the Sardinian towns in 47 B.C. (Dio Cassius, 42.56.3), and heavy overtaxing seriously compromised the grain supply in 40 B.C. (Dio Cassius 48.31.2).

[40] See n. 25.

[41] Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 3.91: Pliny lists nearly fifty Sicilian *stipendiariae civitates*. They have been traditionally interpreted as if they contributed with a fixed tax called *stipendium*: D. Vera, 'Augusto, Plinio il Vecchio e la Sicilia in età imperiale. A proposito di recenti scoperte epigrafiche e archeologiche ad Agrigento', *Kokalos* 42 (1996), 31–58, especially 46–47. However, *stipendiarii* in such contexts probably mean 'subjects' in general terms.

[42] Appian, *Bellum Civile* 5.129. See France 2001, op. cit. (n. 6), 365.

"He was therefore summoned by Sextus on the pretext that he should give an account of the grain and money of which he had been in charge".[43] Keeping the commutation requirements in all Sicilian corn purchases may indicate a long-term transformation into a more flexible but 'fixed' land taxation (*tributum soli*).[44]

Hispaniae

In his well-known Verrine text Cicero includes both *Hispani* and *Poeni* as subjects of a *vectigal certum (…) stipendiarium*.[45] Although there is hardly any evidence to support the collection of a land tax in the Hispanic *provinciae* by the time that speech was written, a rather puzzling passage by Livy,[46] reporting news from an early stage of Roman control (171 B.C.), might give us a clue. The Roman historian records some complaints from local *populi* from both *provinciae* before the Senate in Rome against former officials about abuses in the collection of a *vicensuma* or *vicesima*, in other words what looked like a 5% quota of the harvest. The whole story might be interpreted as if some provincial governors required the commutation (*adaeratio*) of quotas for their money value, obtaining an immediate profit in cash instead of the goods originally requested, and pocketing it illegally.[47] In such a war economy background, *adaeratio* may not only have been an early and useful precedent, but also common practice long before any regular land taxation was organised. I believe that, to a certain extent, Cicero may have been aware of this when he included those *Hispani* as contributors in his Verrine quotation which, after all, focuses on nothing other than a thorough description of how land taxation worked in Sicily and other provinces.[48]

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[43] Dio Cassius 48.45.6: Κἀκ τούτον μεταπεμφθεις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, πρόφασιν ὅπως περί τε τοῦ σίτου καὶ περὶ τῶν χρημάτων ὧν διῳκήκει ἀπολογίσηται.

[44] Appian, *Bellum Civile* 5.72; A. Pinzone, 'La *cura annonae* di Pompeo e l'introduzione dello *stipendium* in Sicilia', *Provincia Sicilia* (Catania 1999), 173–206, especially 200 ff.; Genovese 1993, op. cit. (n. 17), 239.

[45] Cicero, 2 *In Verrem* 3.6.12.

[46] Livy 43.2.12: *Ita praeteritis silentio obliteratis in futurum tamen consultum ab senatu Hispanis, quod impetrarunt, ne frumenti aestimationem magistratus Romanus haberet neve cogeret vicensimas vendere Hispanos, quanti ipse vellet, et ne praefecti in oppida sua ad pecunias cogendas imponerentur*. J. Muñiz Coello, *El proceso de repetundis del 171 a.C. Livius 43.2* (Huelva 1981). J. S. Richardson, *Hispaniae. Spain and the development of Roman Imperialism. 218–82 B.C.* (Cambridge 1986), 112–116; Ñaco 2005, op. cit. (n. 6), 392–394.

[47] Ñaco 2003, op. cit. (n. 3), 246–248.

[48] Genovese 1993, op. cit. (n. 17), 174 ff.; Gebbia 2003, op. cit. (n. 38), 31 ff.

Although civilian *redemptores* might have supplied the legions which were deployed in the Hispaniae, the actual exploitation on a large scale of natural resources, like silver and lead mining, did probably not start before the end of the Third Celtiberian War in 133 B.C. Closer attention has recently been given to the historical impact of the senatorial commission deployed after Numantia's destruction, although no relevant information on taxation may be deduced from the actual data.[49] A relatively peaceful atmosphere in New Carthage's and Sierra Morena's mining districts made it easier for *publicani* of Italian origin, sometimes forming complex *societates publicanorum*, to hire mining contracts for the next few decades.[50] However, the war economy still dominated the Roman occupation of the Iberian Peninsula. Native towns surviving the conquest in the earliest rearguard contributed by feeding and billeting the Roman armies that were staying, wintering or just passing through towards the inner war front, which remained more or less active even after 133 B.C.[51] Thus, it is hardly surprising that most of the Iron-age 'Iberian coinage', inscribed with native alphabets and using native types, was struck from that moment until Sertorius' fall in 72 B.C.

Paradoxically, during the civil war between Caesar and Pompey, legates from both contenders not only minted a great deal of Roman coinage while they were fighting in the Iberian Peninsula, but also made use of issues coined in Latin by local towns publicly supporting the dynasts at war.[52] The Hispanic contributors continued to be subjected to confiscations, war indemnities or casual requisitions, normally depending on their political alliances. For instance, Caesar's severe repression of those towns which had formerly supported Pompey in 45 B.C. can hardly be described as regular taxation. Rather, the dictator made casual exactions and land confiscations from those who, from his perspective,

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[49] Appian, *Iberiké* 99–100. See F. Pina Polo, 'Las comisiones senatoriales para la reorganización de Hispania (Appian *Iberiké* 99–100)' *Dialogues d'Histoire Ancienne* 23.2 (1997), 83–104.

[50] C. Domergue et P. Sillières, 'Un village de la Sierra Morena vers le 100 av. J.-C.', in J.M. Blázquez, D. Domergue et P. Sillières (eds.), *La Loba (Fuenteobejuna, province de Cordoue, Espagne)*. (Bordeaux 2002), 383–398. Ñaco 2003, op. cit. (n. 3), 115–126.

[51] Ñaco 2006, op. cit. (n. 18), 156 ff.

[52] F. Chaves, 'Guerra y moneda en la Hispania del *Bellum Civile*', in E. Melchor et al. (eds.), *Julio César y Corduba: tiempo y espacio en ela campaña de Munda. 49–45 a.C.* (Cordoba 2005), 207–245; P.P. Ripollès, 'Coinage and identity in the Roman Provinces: Spain', in Ch. Howgego, V. Heuchert and A. Burnett (eds.), *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces* (Oxford 2005), 79–93.

deserved political punishment, whereas he awarded citizenship and immunity to some towns which had remained loyal.[53]

Such an old system of subjugation, based upon forced *deditio* agreements between Rome and the natives, was to be progressively replaced by a collective fiscal treatment of the provincials, mostly under the Roman-like scheme of the *civitas*. The civitas' civic and financial institutions operated as a tax-collecting device, assisting both the local and Roman administration, until regular contributions were succesfully implemented by imperial taxation during the Principate.[54] As far as we know, the Augustan edict contained in the *Tabula Pameiobrigensis* (15 B.C.) tried to restructure the fiscal administration of several native *populi* in Asturia, provisionally called *Transduriana Provincia*, some years after the end of the Cantabrian Wars (19 B.C.). Immunity was ordered for some loyal *populi*, overtaxing the rest.[55] At this stage, an agrimensorial category, such as the *ager per mensura extremitatem comprehensus*, may be linked with changes in the tax system. Probably as a provisional measure, the territories of those peregrine *civitates* and *populi* who had not been centuriated before, were finally surveyed by their outer limits, awaiting further fiscal restructuring during the Principate.[56]

Conclusions

To sum up, the West was never conceived as a unity regarding the contributions that Republican Rome collected from it, independent from whether they were casual requisitions or regular taxes. It is true, however, that in the second and especially the first century B.C., Roman imperialism and the ideology behind it evolved significantly as to the rewards of victory. Increasing Roman control over the whole known world produced the expectancy of not only living off the spoils from

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[53] Dio Cassius 43.39.4–5; Suetonius, *Divus Iulius* 42. See J.M. Roddaz, 'De la conquête à la pacification: la mutation des sociétés indigènes', in C. Castillo et. al. (eds.), *Sociedad y economía en el Occidente romano* (Pamplona 2003), 15–26; France 2006, op. cit. (n. 3), 13 ff.

[54] J.F. Rodríguez Neila, 'Administración financiera y documentación de archivo en las leyes municipales de Hispania', *Cahiers du Centre Gustave-Glotz* 14 (2003), 115–129.

[55] I. Sastre, 'La *restitutio* del Edicto del Bierzo: sistema tributario y formas de desigualdad en el Noroeste de Hispania', *Eutopia* n.s. 2, 1 (2002), 77–92.

[56] A. Orejas, 'L'*ager mensura comprehensus* et le sol provincial: l'Occident de la Péninsule Ibérique', in D. Conso et al. (eds.), *Les vocabulaires techniques des arpenteurs romains* (Paris 2005), 193–199.

the enemy, as before, but also off the regular taxes submitted by provincial subjects. Re-using already existing tax-systems in Sicily, Africa and most of the East may have helped Rome in those regions. But only the last episodes of the civil wars made such transformations global. The enormous financial pressure of the war effort was eased by using all contributors in the *imperium romanum*, as happened after the long-term conquest of the Hispaniae. While the political and financial system of the old Republic was unable to respond in practical terms to the management of a real Mediterranean empire, the Augustan peace solved the problems as soon as all tax-payers and their lands were surveyed and accounted for. Nevertheless, the newly designed imperial taxation was not an entirely new invention.

Barcelona, September 2006

THE IMPACT OF THE THIRD CENTURY CRISIS ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE WITH THE EAST

Dario Nappo

The commerce between the Roman Empire and the East was a flourishing one. From the far East came silk, spices and other similar goods. This commerce has frequently been described as a trade in luxuries, the result of decadent tastes and desires, especially of the Roman élites. We should, however, be careful in applying terms such as 'luxury goods' indiscriminately to these items. Some goods were indeed luxury goods, but on many occasions these commodities had medicinal or religious applications.[1]

The Romans were not the first to recognize and exploit lucrative trade opportunities with Eastern regions. Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his descendants constructed ports along the Red Sea. Through these ports came exotic merchandise, including the elephants and gold that Ptolemy II used to wage war and pay his mercenary troops.[2] On the Arabian side of the Red Sea, the Nabatean kingdom had many commercial relations with South Arabia, from which it imported some spices, especially incense.[3] But when Octavian added Egypt to the Roman Empire in 30 B.C., the Romans quickly became the dominant force in the East-West trade.[4] From that moment onwards, they could use their knowledge of the monsoon winds to improve the imports of goods from the East.[5]

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[1] S.E. Sidebotham, *Roman Economic Policy in the Erythra Thalassa. 30 B.C.–A.D. 217* (Leiden 1986), 20–21; W. Ball, *Rome in the East: the Transformation of an Empire* (London and New York 2000), 130; G.K. Young, *Rome's Eastern Trade* (London and New York 2001), 14–17.

[2] Sidebotham 1986, op. cit. (n. 1), 2–7; S.E. Sidebotham 'Ports of the Red Sea and the Arabia-India trade', in V. Begley and R.D. De Puma, *Rome and India* (New York 1991), 12–15; F. De Romanis, *Cassia, Cinnamomo, Ossidiana* (Roma 1996), 139; S.M. Burstein, 'Ivory and Ptolemaic exploration of the Red Sea. The missing factor', *Topoi* 6 (1996), 799–807.

[3] N.H.H. Sitwell, *The World The Romans Knew* (London 1984), 83–84.

[4] Strabo, *Geographia* 2.5.12. See Sidebotham 1986, op. cit. (n. 1), 18; De Romanis 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), 167.

[5] L. Casson, 'Rome's Trade with the East: The Sea Voyage to Africa and India', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 110 (1980), 27; G.W. Bowersock, *Roman*

At the height of the Roman imperial age, several main ports were operating on the Red Sea coast. Although most of these were built by the Ptolemies and the Nabateans, it was the Romans who greatly expanded their economic importance. Many literary sources help to reconstruct how this 'harbour system' worked during the first two centuries A.D.: the most important are Strabo's *Geography*, Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*, Ptolemy's *Geography* and, particularly the anonymous *Periplus Maris Erythraei*. According to Ptolemy's *Geography*, these ports were from north to south Clysma, Philoteras, Myos Hormos, Leukos Limen, Nechesia and Berenike (on the Egyptian side); and Aila and Leuke Kome (on the Arabian side).[6]

So, starting at the Egyptian coast, the first port was Clysma, located at the northernmost point on the Red Sea, very close to modern Suez. It was founded in the Ptolemaic age, but was apparently not greatly utilized before the end of the second century A.D.[7] The site of the Ptolemaic town of Philoteras has not been yet discovered. Strabo says that it was located before the "hot, salt springs",[8] which seem to point to a place not far from Aïn Sukhna (Hot Spring) some 50 km south of modern Suez. Several modern scholars suggest that it is possibly situated to the south of the modern port of Safaga.[9] Various sources, furthermore, attribute a leading role in the Erythrean trade to Myos Hormos. It is significant that in the *Periplus Maris Erytraei* only two ports on the Egyptian coast are mentioned: Myos Hormos and Berenike.[10] The location of Myos Hormos was established in the last years as modern Quseir al-Qadim.[11] We have no idea about the location of Leukos Limen or its real importance. Apart from Ptolemy, no literary source mentions it. Recently it was suggested that the great geographer made a mistake, duplicating the name of a harbour on the Arabian coast (Leuke

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Arabia (Cambridge MA 1983), 21; L. Casson, 'Ancient Naval Technology and the Route to India', in Begley and De Puma 1991, op. cit. (n. 2), 8–11.

[6] Ptolemy, *Geographia* 4.5.14–5.

[7] See the report of the excavations at Clysma: B. Bruyère, *Fouilles de Clysma-Qolzum (Suez), 1930–1932* (Cairo 1966). See also Sidebotham 1991, op. cit. (n. 2), 15–17.

[8] Strabo, *Geographia* 16.4.5.

[9] Sidebotham 1991, op. cit. (n. 2), 19; R.B. Jackson, *At Empire's Edge. Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier*. (New Haven and London 2002), 80.

[10] *Periplus Maris Erythraei* 1. Cf. Strabo, *Geographia* 2.5.12 and Plinius Maior, *Naturalis Historia* 6.103.

[11] D. Whitcomb, 'Quseir al-Qadim and the location of Myos Hormos', *Topoi* 6 (1996), 747–772; H. Cuvigny, *La route de Myos Hormos, Fouilles de l'IFAO 48/2* (Paris 2003), 24–27.

Kome), while he was writing the list of the Egyptian ports.[12] Nechesia has never been positively identified, but according to a recent theory it could be located at Marsa Nakari. The excavations at Marsa Nakari however have brought to light an imperial and Byzantine town, but not a Hellenistic one. This is incompatible with the fact that Nechesia was founded in the Ptolemaic age. So, at the moment, we must wait for new archaeological campaigns.[13] On the other hand, it is certain that ancient Berenike is modern Ras Benas.[14] It was founded by Ptolemy II, in 275 B.C., and was, especially by the mid-first century A.D., one of the two busiest and most important harbours on the Egyptian Red Sea coast.[15] For that period, we know there was a customs house at Berenike, and that taxes were levied upon the items (especially wine) travelling out of the Empire to India.[16]

The Arabian coast was under the control of the Nabatean Kingdom until the second century A.D., but its economy was strongly tied with the Roman trade. According to Ptolemy, there were two ports: Aila and Leuke Kome. The first one (modern 'Aqaba) is mentioned in some ancient sources for its involvement in the spice trade from South Arabia;[17] we get information about a trade link between Aila and the East for the first time from Eusebius of Caesarea.[18] Leuke Kome, more or less in front of Myos Hormos, was also involved in the incense trade from Arabia. The zenith of Leuke Kome was between the first century B.C. and the first century A.D., then its importance decreased constantly, especially after the unlucky Aelius Gallus' expedition.[19]

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[12] Cuvigny 2003, op. cit. (n. 11), 28–30.

[13] Young 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), 44; J.A. Seeger, 'A preliminary report on the 1999 field season at Marsa Nakari', *Journal of American Research Centre in Egypt* 38 (2001), 77–88; Jackson 2002, op. cit. (n. 9), 85.

[14] S.E. Sidebotham and W. Wendrich, *Berenike '94. Preliminary Report of the Excavations at Berenike (Egyptian Red Sea Coast) and the survey of the Eastern Desert* (Leiden 1995), 5.

[15] *Periplus Maris Erythraei* 1; S.E. Sidebotham and W. Wendrich, *Berenike '95. Preliminary Report of the Excavations at Berenike (Egyptian Red Sea Coast) and the survey of the Eastern Desert* (Leiden 1996), 95; S.E. Sidebotham and W. Wendrich, *Berenike '96. Report of the Excavations at Berenike (Egyptian Red Sea Coast) and the survey of the Eastern Desert* (Leiden 1998), 119.

[16] R.S. Bagnall, C. Helms and A.M.F.W. Verhoogt, *Documents from Berenike. Volume I. Greek Ostraka from the 1996–1998 seasons* (Bruxelles 2000), 8–11; R.S. Bagnall, C. Helms and A.M.F.W. Verhoogt, *Documents from Berenike. Volume II. Texts from the 1999–2001 seasons* (Bruxelles 2005), 5–7.

[17] Strabo, *Geographia* 16.2.30; 16.4.4; Diodorus Siculus, 3.43.4; Plinius Maior, *Naturalis Historia* 5.12.

[18] Eusebius, *Onomasticon*, 6.17–21.

[19] Sidebotham 1991, op. cit. (n. 2), 21.

It should be clear that, between the first and second centuries A.D., the mainstay of the Roman harbour system on the Red Sea was Myos Hormos and Berenike. We have to take into account that in the north of the Red Sea there are continuous strong winds from north to south. These winds made it very difficult for the sailors to travel from the south to the north.[20] This can partly explain the reason why these southern ports were so successful: it was more convenient for the cargoes from India to berth at the southernmost point they could, even if consequently the cargo had to be transported by land (along the Egyptian Eastern desert) up to Alexandria, which could make prices rise too much. This disadvantage could be skipped by using the port of Coptos, on the Nile river. It was a sort of link between the two southern ports and Alexandria. The importance of this town is attested by Strabo, who calls it ἐμπόριον: there, the items from India, Arabia and Ethiopia arrived.[21] Goods coming to Myos Hormos and Berenike were carried to Coptos through caravan roads that crossed the Egyptian Eastern desert. There they were collected, registered, taxed,[22] and then sent to Alexandria via the Nile.[23]

During 2003, through a series of archaeological campaigns in the Farasan islands, fragments were found of an inscription (dated to 144 A.D.) attesting the presence of a Roman garrison (a *vexillatio* of the *Legio II Traiana Fortis*) on this island.[24] The Farasan archipelago is very far from the Roman boundaries (around 1.000 km from the Egyptian *limes*), so one should imagine that the only possible aim to keep a garrison so far (out of the Empire) was to control trade in the southern Red Sea. It might also be supposed that on this island there was some sort of small customs house (to collect taxes on the items that were imported into the Empire), although this cannot be proved. It would

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[20] Strabo, *Geographia* 17.1.45. See Sidebotham 1986, op. cit. (n. 1), 51–52; De Romanis 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), 21–28.

[21] Strabo, *Geographia* 17.1.45. See also Plinius Maior, *Naturalis Historia* 5.60.

[22] D.W. Rathbone, 'Koptos the Emporion. Economy and Society, I–III A.D.', in M.-F. Boussac (ed.), *Autour de Coptos. Actes du colloque organisé au Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon* (Lyon 2002), 179–198.

[23] V.A. Maxfield, 'The eastern desert forts and the army in Egypt during the Principate', in D.M. Bailey (ed.), *Archaeological Research in Roman Egypt* (Ann Arbor 1996), 11–12; R.S. Bagnall and D.W. Rathbone, *Egypt from Alexander to the Copts* (London 2004), 280–284.

[24] This legion by the time of Antoninus Pius became the only one located in Egypt. See S. Daris, 'Legio II Traiana Fortis', in Y. Le Bohec (ed.), *Les Légions de Rome sous le Haut-Empire* (Paris 2000), 359–363.

seem reasonable to think that Farasan's post was linked to Berenike (maybe with its customs house).[25] To conclude, we can be sure that for more than two centuries the Red Sea southern ports were the spine of the Roman Red Sea harbour system.

There is considerable evidence that the Erythrean trade suffered a marked downturn in the later third century, and there is good reason to believe that the volume of commerce passing through the Red Sea ports declined significantly at this time. The archaeological evidence for such a decline is generally negative: there are very few finds that could be related to the later third century.[26] The intestine wars, the external pressure, and the economic crisis of the third century had a damaging effect on the Eastern long-distance trade. It has already been noted that trade was prosperous when the Empire was at peace, that is, from the later first century B.C.; consequently, it should hardly come as a surprise that internal warfare in the third century had damaged this trade. Similarly, the uncontrolled inflation which gripped the Roman world during the latter part of the third century damaged international commerce, in so far as the buying power of Roman currency collapsed.[27] In addition, the serious inflation greatly reduced the ability of citizens to purchase luxury goods.

However, the Red Sea trade gradually recovered. Possibly, this was the result of the new stability of the Roman currency, after Diocletian's and Constantine's reforms.[28] But the Roman recovery took place in a changed background. By the fourth century A.D., looking at the economic and political map of the Red Sea, one could spot several changes. First of all, the mainstay of the Roman harbour system moved to the north. The 'golden age' of Myos Hormos and Berenike came to an end. The excavations show that Myos Hormos ceased to be

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[25] For a complete view of the archaeological investigation at Farasan islands, see F. Villeneuve, C. Philipps and W. Facey, 'Une inscription latine de l'archipel Farasān (sud de la mer Rouge) et son contexte archéologique et historique', *Arabia* 2 (2004), 143–190.

[26] Young 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), 82–85.

[27] See K.W. Harl, *Coinage in the Roman Economy* (Baltimore 1996), 126–136; E. Lo Cascio, 'Prezzi in oro e prezzi in unità di conto tra il III e il IV sec. d.C.', in R. Descat, *Économie antique: Prix et formation des prix dans les économies antiques* (Saint Bertrand de Comminges 1997), 161–182.

[28] See E. Lo Cascio, 'Aspetti della politica monetaria nel IV secolo', *Atti dell'Accademia Romanistica Costantiniana, X Convegno Internazionale* (Perugia 1993), 481–502; R. Rees, *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy* (Edinburgh 2004), 40–41.

used by the end of the second century,[29] while the decline of Berenike was only temporary: we have only little evidence relating to the third century, even if this harbour was clearly used again in the fourth and fifth centuries, never reaching the levels of the first and the second.[30] As we will see, the main role was now played by the northern ports: first of all Aila and Clysma, but also other smaller harbours, such as ʿAbu Shaʾar and Jotabe.

ʿAbu Shaʾar was a fort town located very close to the coast; an inscription discovered during the excavations informs us that the fort was built around 309–311 A.D.[31] It also makes clear that ʿAbu Shaʾar was part of a *limes*.[32] From this fortress, the garrisons could monitor the movements of potentially troublesome desert tribes such as the Blemmyes,[33] and patrolled the various desert routes leading to and from ʿAbu Shaʾar.[34] That the fortress had a patrolling function for the trade routes is attested by the word *mercator* which appears in a fragment of another inscription.[35] An *ostrakon* dated at the sixth century shows a man who calls himself ἰνδικοπλεύστης:[36] a clear attestation that the commercial exchanges passing through ʿAbu Shaʾar directed to the East were still lively during the sixth century A.D.

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[29] See J.H. Johnson, 'Inscriptional Material', in D. Whitcomb and J.H. Johnson (eds.), *Quseir al-Qadim, 1980 Preliminary Report* (Malibu 1982), 265; Cuvigny 2003, op. cit. (n. 11), 201–203.

[30] See S.E. Sidebotham and W. Wendrich, *Berenike '97. Report of the Excavations at Berenike (Egyptian Red Sea Coast) and the survey of the Eastern Desert* (Leiden 1999), 443–456; S.E. Sidebotham, 'Late Roman Berenike', *Journal of American Research Centre in Egypt* 39 (2002), 217–240; Bagnall and Rathbone 2004, op. cit. (n. 23), 291–292.

[31] The text of the inscription was edited by R.S. Bagnall and J.A. Sheridan, 'Greek and Latin Documents from ʿAbu Shaʾar 1990–1991', *Journal of American Research Centre in Egypt* 31 (1994), 159–160.

[32] The meaning of the word *limes* in this age has been clarified several years ago by an excellent article of B. Isaac, 'The meaning of the terms limes and limitanei', *Journal of Roman Studies* 78 (1988), 133: "the term *limes* is attested as a formal administrative concept, denoting a frontier district administered by a military commander, *dux*."

[33] It is significant that the commander Aurelius Maximinus was already known by the title of *dux Aegypti Thebaidos utrarumque Libyarum*, attested for the year 308/309 A.D. at Luxor (see *Année Épigraphique* 1934, 7; 8). This office was introduced by Diocletian to face Blemmyes' raids. See Bagnall and Sheridan 1994, op. cit. (n. 31), 161.

[34] S.E. Sidebotham, 'Preliminary Report on the 1990–91 Seasons of Fieldwork at ʿAbu Shaʾar (Red Sea cost)', *Journal of American Research Centre in Egypt* 31 (1994), 133–158.

[35] Bagnall and Sheridan 1994, op. cit. (n. 31), 162–163.

[36] R.S. Bagnall and J.A. Sheridan, 'Greek and Latin Documents from ʿAbu Shaʾar 1992–1993', *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrology* 31 (1994), 112.

There is not much information from the ancient sources about Jotabe: we do not know the exact position of the island, even if it is clear that it was in the Gulf of ʿAqaba.[37] Nevertheless, we have some data that we can consider to be certain: on the island, at least between the fifth and the sixth century, there was a customs house, where taxes were levied upon the items getting from the East into to the Empire.[38] We can also suggest that the customs house of Jotabe was closely related not only with Aila, but also with Clysma.[39]

To sum up: it seems clear that by the fourth century A.D. East trade in the Red Sea was centred on two principal ports (Clysma and Aila); in addition, there was an island (Jotabe), that functioned as a customs house. To complete this system, some military forts (ʿAbu Shaʾar was only one link of a chain) kept the trade safe and regular.

Such a scenario is no doubt symmetric to the scenario of the first and second centuries A.D. Although the names have changed, the roles remained the same. During late antiquity, the two ports that were the mainstay of the Erythrean harbour system, Myos Hormos and Berenike, were replaced by Clysma and Aila. Linked to Berenike, there was the post at Farasan islands, from where the commercial traffic in the south of the Red Sea was controlled and where there was (maybe) a sort of customs house; this role is now played by Jotabe island. The symmetry is nearly perfect. But why did such a change happen? Usually, modern scholars have identified the third century warfare, that led to the collapse of the southern system, as the origin of this shift to the north. In fact, if we assume that the southern ports were irreparably destroyed (as will be explored below), we must infer that the Romans were forced to exploit the northern ports, which were still working.

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[37] Starting by the testimony of Procopius (*Bellum Persianum* 1.19.3) that the island was no more then 1000 stades from Aila, some scholars have tried to identify the ancient Jotabe with Tirān, in the Gulf of ʿAqaba, but the archaeological investigations at Tirān brought to light no finds that could be related to a Roman occupation of the island: see B. Rothenberg and Y. Aharoni, *God's Wilderness: Discoveries in Sinai* (Toronto 1961), 162. An alternative hypothesis should locate Jotabe at Jeziret Faraʿun, but also there the archaeological excavations found no Roman evidence: see Ph. Mayerson, 'The Island of Iotabê in the Byzantine Sources: A Reprise', *Bulletin of American Society for the Oriental Research* 287 (1992), 3; *Idem*, 'A note on Iotabe and several other islands in the Red Sea', *American School of Oriental Research* 298 (1995), 33–35.

[38] Malchus, 2.404–406; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 141.15–18; Choricius Gazaeus, *Laudatio Aratii et Stephani* 65.22–23; 67.17–19.

[39] See M. Sartre, *Inscriptions grècques et latines de la Syrie*, vol. 13.1 (Paris 1982), 112–117; W. Brandes, *Finanzverwaltung in Krisenzeiten* (Frankfurt am Main 2002), 239–255.

This reconstruction, however, is not sound, for several reasons. The first objection is a methodological one. It is not correct to explain every change which occurred between the second and fourth century as a mechanical consequence of the crisis, denying any possibility that Roman initiative and talent could have worked out an efficient answer to a difficult situation. Thus, the traditional reconstruction of the change is based on the assumption that Diocletian definitely destroyed Coptos around the end of the third century.[40] Since Coptos was the main link to the Mediterranean Sea, one inclines to think that its collapse affected also Myos Hormos and Berenike.

The archaeological excavations clearly show that this scenario is not realistic. In fact, Myos Hormos had already started its decline at the end of the second century A.D. Furthermore, Berenike, after a period of crisis during the third century, came back into use, even if not in her previous role. If Coptos had actually been destroyed, it would no longer have been convenient to use a harbour such as Berenike, since it had no direct link to the Mediterranean Sea.

Recent excavations show beyond any doubt that Coptos was never destroyed by Diocletian.[41] Of course, this town suffered consequences of the tetrarchic military reactions, but it was not destroyed.[42] The eclipse of Coptos therefore, was only temporary, and it coincides with the crisis of Berenike. So, when Coptos recovered, Berenike also came back into use. We can clearly see that any hypothesis based on the destruction of Coptos is not sound, so an alternative might be suggested.

We know that in the fourth century A.D. the core of the Erythrean harbour system was in the north. This was also characteristic of the following centuries, and we cannot explain it by assuming that Coptos was destroyed. We can imagine that the temporary eclipse of the southern ports gave of course an impulse to the development of the northern ports. But maybe this development had already started earlier. If this

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[40] Attested by Eutropius, *Breviarum* 9.22–23 and Hyerolamus, *Chronicon* a.266, followed by S. Williams, *Diocletian and the Roman Recovery* (London 1985), 78–88; C. Zuckerman, 'Les Campagnes des Tétrarques, 296–298. Note de cronologie', *Antiquité Tardive* 2 (1994), 68–70; Young 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), 85–86.

[41] See H. Cuvigny, 'Coptos, plaque tournante du commerce érythréen, et les routes transdésertiques', in *Coptos: L'Egypte antique aux portes du désert* (Lyon and Paris 2000), 158–175.

[42] See J.-L. Fournet, 'Coptos dans l'Antiquité tardive (fin IIIe–VIIe siècle apr. J.-C.)', in *Coptos: L'Egypte antique aux portes du désert* (Lyon and Paris 2000), 196–215.

hypothesis is correct, we have to assume that the crisis of the southern ports improved capacities already existing, but not yet used.

Clysma was connected by Trajan, through a navigable canal, to the Nile (near Babylon) and, then, to Alexandria.[43] This channel speeded up travel from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea:[44] nevertheless, it did not help the town to increase its prosperity before the fourth century, when we have clear attestations of the leading role of Clysma in the area. Unfortunately, the archaeological investigations of the site yielded inconclusive results.[45] Instead, the documentary and literary evidence give a coherent picture. As we have just seen, the papyri show us that the canal functioned until the Arab age,[46] while the literary sources tell about the wealth of the town and its role as a great port of trade, to which ships from India came.[47]

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[43] Ptolemy, *Geographia* 4.5. Trajan was not the first ruler who tried to connect the Red Sea and the Nile. We know that the pharaoh Necus, the Persian king Darius I and Ptolemy II also tried to build the channel, as attested by Herodotus, 2.158 and Diodorus Siculus, 1.33.8–12. On the argument, see A. Calderini, 'Ricerche sul regime delle acque nell'Egitto greco-romano', *Aegyptus* 1 (1920), 37–62; C. Bourdon, *Anciens canaux, anciens sites et ports de Suez* (Cairo 1925); P.J. Sijpesteijn, 'Der ΠΟΤΑΜΟΣ ΤΡΑΙΑΝΟΣ', *Aegyptus* 43 (1963), 70–83; De Romanis 1996, op. cit. (n. 2), 71–95; J.-J. Aubert, 'Aux origines du canal de Suez? Le canal du Nil à la mer Rouge revisité', in M. Clavel-Lévèque and H. Hermon, *Espaces intégrés et ressources naturelles dans l'Empire Romain* (Paris 2004), 219–252.

[44] The canal was used until the Arab conquest and also after, as the papyrological evidence attests: 112 A.D.: *SB* 6.9545; 208 A.D.: *P.Oxy*. 60 (1994), 4070; 221 A.D.: *P.Bub*. 4.1; 297 A.D.: *SB* 5.7676 (= *P.Cair.Isid*., 81); end third/beginning fourth century: *P.Oxy*. 55 (1988), 3814; 332 A.D.: *P.Oxy*. 12 (1916), 1426; 358/359 A.D.: *SB* 5.7756 (= *P.Lond.Inv*., 2574); 420/421 A.D.: *PSI* 689; 423 A.D.: *PSI* 87; between fifth and sixth century: *P.Wash*. 1.7. After the Arab conquest, we find *P.Lond*. 1326 (710 A.D.) e *P.Lond*. 1465 (between 709 and 714).

[45] For the report see Bruyère 1966, op. cit. (n. 7). For a critical view, see Ph. Mayerson, 'The Port of Clysma (Suez) in transition from Roman to Arab rule', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 55 (1996), 119–126.

[46] See the documents already quoted above. Despite these texts, some scholars have suggested that Trajan's channel was never used as a commercial link. See Mayerson 1996, op. cit. (n. 45), 121: "whether the canal was navigable at that time is unknown and whether the cleaning was designed to irrigate new lands along its route is equally unknown." This opinion seems to be too pessimistic. Cf, Aubert 2004, op. cit. (n. 43), 247, who suggests that the canal was used only in some periods during the year as a commercial link, and this hypothesis could explain the irregularity of the testimonies coming from the papyri.

[47] Lucianus, *Alexander Pseudomantis* 44.16–18; *Itinerarium Egeriae* 6.4–7.9; Philostorgius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 35. The most interesting is of course Petrus Diaconus, *Liber de locis sanctis* CCSL, vol. 175, 101.

The development of Aila started under Diocletian, who transferred the *Legio X Fretensis* there from Jerusalem.[48] Recent archaeological investigations show that its prosperity grew during late antiquity, until the Arab conquest.[49] The most interesting information coming out of the excavations is the close connection between Aila and the Axumite port of Adulis,[50] an argument that will be dealt with below. Like Clysma, Aila is also remembered by the literary sources as an important port of trade with East in late antiquity.[51] So, the question is: why did the Romans prefer to use the northern ports after the third century? One may argue that, at the outset, this course was triggered by the eclipse of the southern ports. But even when Coptos and Berenike came back into use their role had become a secondary one. Something changed, which made it more convenient to continue to use the northern ports.

As we have already seen, the volume of commerce passing through the Red Sea ports declined significantly during the third century. In that period, the Romans lost their role in controlling trade with the East. It is not a coincidence that, when queen Zenobia of Palmyra became independent from Rome, she annexed Egypt and Arabia to her kingdom, to better control the Eastern trade. After Zenobia's fall, the lack of control in the Eastern provinces was more evident.

In such a critical period, some peoples greatly increased their own role in the East trade at Rome's expense: Sassanians, Arab Hymiarites, and Ethiopic Aksumites. Particularly the latter were able to integrate themselves into the Roman economic system.[52] The powerful Aksumite kingdom sent ships to India and collected Eastern items at Adulis, the main port (and capital city) of the kingdom. The ancient sources tell us that Roman traders went there to buy Indian items. Thus, Roman

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[48] Eusebius, *Onomasticon* 6.17–21.

[49] For the reports, see S.T. Parker, 'The Roman ʿAqaba Project: the 1994 Campaign', *Annual of the Department of Antiquity of Jordan* 40 (1996), 231–257; *Idem*, 'The Roman ʿAqaba Project: the 1996 Campaign', *Annual of the Department of Antiquity of Jordan* 42 (1998), 375–394; *Idem*, 'The Roman ʿAqaba Project: the 1998 Campaign', *Annual of the Department of Antiquity of Jordan* 44 (2000), 373–394; *Idem*, 'The Roman ʿAqaba Project: the 2000 Campaign', *Annual of the Department of Antiquity of Jordan* 46 (2002), 409–428; *Idem*, 'The Roman ʿAqaba Project: the 2002 Campaign', *Annual of the Department of Antiquity of Jordan* 47 (2003), 321–333.

[50] Also attested by Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Topographia Christiana* 2.54.

[51] Procopius, *Bellum Persianum* 1.19; Antoninus Placentius, CCSL vol. 149, 175.

[52] One should note the Aksumite coins are a close imitation of the Roman ones. See L. Pedroni, 'Una collezione di monete aksumite', *Bollettino di Numismatica* 28 (1997), 7–147.

needs were partly satisfied by Aksum. It was now not convenient to use any southern port (like Berenike) to travel to Adulis: this option forced to a long trip along the Eastern desert. From the harbours of Aila or Clysma, travel by sea was definitely cheaper, even if it was necessary to sail against the winds that blew in the north. It is worth remembering that some scholars have noticed that, in late antiquity, there is a remarkable ignorance about the geography of India.[53] This phenomenon could be explained, among others reasons, by assuming that there was only very limited direct travel of Roman sailors to India.

On these last points, an objection could be raised. As seen, sailing from south to north in the Red Sea was very difficult for Roman ships, equipped with their square sail. How could this problem be resolved? No doubt, the best solution was to use a lateen sail that could allow ships sail close to the wind. Unfortunately, our information about the age in which this kind of sail was introduced is inadequate. Nevertheless, we can at least confirm that the Romans, probably by the second century A.D., improved on a manœuvre (already known, but not often used) which allowed a square sail to be turned into a sort of rough lateen sail when necessary. This arrangement made sailing in the north of the Red Sea simpler and, consequently, more convenient.[54] To conclude, it seems that the 'new system', emerging after the third century crisis, was efficient, like the previous one: in the late Empire Romans imported many goods from the East, maybe also to a greater extent than in the early Empire.[55]

It is, therefore, important to underline once more that the reorganization of the whole area in late antiquity was not simply a consequence of crisis, or of a period of decline. We saw that this change might already have started by the end of the second century A.D. (the period when Myos Hormos started declining), and we may assume that the troubles of the third century merely accelerated a development that was already on its way. At the same time, it is clear that such a new arrangement

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[53] Ph. Mayerson, 'A Confusion of Indias: Asian India and African India in the Byzantine Sources', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113 (1993), 169–174.

[54] The discussion about the introduction of the lateen sail is very rich. The most interesting work is still L. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton 1971). See also L. Basch, 'L'apparition de la voile latine en Méditerranée', in D. Meeks and D. Garcia, *Techniques et économie antiques et médiévales: le temps de l'innovation* (Paris 1997), 214–223.

[55] J.-P. Callu, 'I commerci oltre i confini dell'Impero', in A. Carandini, L. Cracco Ruggini and A. Giardina (eds.), *Storia di Roma 3/1* (Torino 1993), 487–524.

in the area was not only forced by negative circumstances, but was also the result of the talent for organisation, the spirit of adaptability and the technological progress, displayed by late Roman government and traders towards the changed general conditions.

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DEMISE AND FALL OF THE AUGUSTAN MONETARY SYSTEM

Koenraad Verboven

According to the jurist Paulus, coinage originated from the need for a common medium of exchange. To fill this need a *materia* was chosen of which the enduring value was generally recognized (*publica ac perpetua aestimatio*). This *materia* was stamped by a public design (*forma publica*), to be used not so much *ex substantia (…) quam ex quantitate*.[1] Monetary value was created by the *forma publica* and was by definition a legal construct, creating the enforceable obligation to accept coins 'bearing the imperial portrait'. Although coinage required a valuable substance as bearer, the *forma publica* was not intended to guarantee the commodity value of this substance.[2]

The ambivalence of coinage as currency combining intrinsic and nominal value continues to set the terms of the debate today. Money in the ancient world is still seen primarily as coined metal: *materia* subjected to legal norms regarding weight, size, purity, form, design, production and use. The debate still revolves around the question how important the contribution of coins' metal value was to uphold purchasing power and face value.

The distinction between 'money' and 'currency' is mostly limited to the role of cheques and bank money. The difference, however, is more fundamental and crucial to a proper understanding of how money and currency functioned. The essence of money is the social institutionalisation of its primary tokens (whether coins, cowrie shells, bullion, bank notes or anything else). 'Money' exists *qua* money only

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[1] E. Lo Cascio, 'How did the Romans view their money and its function?' in C.E. King and D.G. Wigg (eds.), *Coin finds and coin use in the Roman world (13th Oxford Symposium on coinage and monetary history, 1993)* (Berlin 1996), 273–287; C. Nicolet, 'Pline, Paul et la théorie de la monnaie', *Athenaeum* 72 (1984) 105–135; R. Wolters, *Nummi Signati. Untersuchungen zur römischen Münzprägung und Geldwirtschaft* (München 1999), 350–362.

[2] *Sententiae Pauli* 5.25.1; cf. Arrianus, *Epictetus* 3.3.3; K. Verboven, 'The Monetary Enactments of M. Marius Gratidianus' in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History. Vol. VII* (Bruxelles 1994), 117–131; Lo Cascio 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 278.

when the acceptance of its tokens as tokens (and not for instance as bullion in the case of metal coins) in exchange for goods and services is taken for granted.[3] These institutional aspects are money's deepest soul and secret. No monetary system can survive if the acceptance of its tokens is not self-evident.

There are always three interrelated sides to a developed monetary system. The first and most visible are the material and immaterial aspects of money tokens. The second is that of the socialised mind, taught to accept as self evident the value of money tokens. The third is that of the norms and regulations imposed on money tokens by a political authority. The socialised mind is used to a specific form of monetary system, embodied in official regulations and material aspects. Intrinsic values and legal tender may (or may not) be required, but these are largely backup systems, comforting reassurances against doubt.

Currency

The silver *denarius* was the central denomination in the Roman coinage system for over 400 years (211 B.C.E.–238 C.E.). Nero debased it slightly (reducing its weight standard from 1/84 to 1/96 pound, and its purity from ca. 98% to ca. 93.5%). Over the next 90-odd years the silver content diminished to ca. 90%. Marcus Aurelius again cut purity by ca. 10%. The following 50 years the decline continued. By the time of Caracalla purity had fallen to ca. 50%. The last *denarii* struck under Gordian III contained ca. 48% silver and were considerably underweight.

It remains a point of debate whether the public was aware of this evolution. There were no reliable non-destructive assay techniques for silver in the ancient world. The surface of *denarii*-flans since Nero was artificially enriched, so Gordian's last *denarii* looked as 'fine' as ever.[4] Average weight declined under the Severans, but weight variations

[3] Cf. E. Christiansen, *Coinage in Roman Egypt. The hoard evidence* (Aarhus 2004), 15.

[4] Awareness of debasement: Wolters 1999, op. cit. (n. 1), 374; surface enrichment: L.H. Cope, 'Surface-silvered ancient coins', E.T. Hall and D.M. Metcalf (eds.), *Methods of chemical and metallurgical investigation of ancient coinage (Symposium Royal Numismatic Society, London, 1970)* (London 1972), 261–278.

between specimens of the same silver coin types had always been large without demonstrable effects on circulation patterns.[5]

Nevertheless, you cannot fool all of the people all of the time. The debasement of the silver coinage could not be hidden from assayers and bankers. Through them, the general public must have been able to know – if they cared.

The introduction of the *antoninianus* in 215 tariffed at 2 *denarii* but weighing only 1.5, betrays the confidence the imperial administration had that its manipulations would be accepted. It was a handsome coin, even though it contained less than 50% silver. There was little enthusiasm at first and its production was stopped after a few years. But its reintroduction in 238 on a massive scale and the near simultaneous abandoning of the *denarius* production does not appear to have caused much concern. The appearance of *antoniniani* together with *denarii* in hoards confirms the trust they inspired.[6]

Its average weight declined from 4.5 g to a little under 4 g under Decius, but this was masked by the traditionally wide margins allowed for silver coin. However, in the 250's and 260's the *antoninianus* rapidly deteriorated in silver content and weight to a miserable shadow of its former self.[7]

The Egyptian monetary system was long dominated by the base silver *tetradrachms* (13 g, ca. 16% silver) introduced by Nero in 64 C.E., officially equated to 1 *denarius*.[8] In 176/177 Marcus Aurelius issued a small emission of under weight further debased *tetradrachms* (ca. 12 g, ca. 8% silver), which Commodus adopted as his new standard. From the 180's until ca. 250 this 'Commodian' standard was followed and although output decreased, it was well respected until the sole reign of Gallienus (260 C.E.). From then on the Alexandrian *tetradrachms* suffered the same rapid deterioration as the *antoninianus*.[9]

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[5] Cf. R. Duncan-Jones, *Money and Government in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge 1994), 225.

[6] Bland and Lo Cascio believe the *antoninianus* was (re)tariffed to 1.5 *denarii*, corresponding to the silver content in both. If so, however, what was the point of replacing *denarii* by *antoniniani*? R. Bland, 'The development of gold and silver denominations, A.D. 193–253' in C.E. King and D.G. Wigg 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 74–80, and E. Lo Cascio, 'Dall'*antoninianus* al "laureato grande": l'evoluzione monetaria del III secolo alla luce della nuova documentazione di età diocleziana', *Opus* 3 (1984), 139–144.

[7] K.W. Harl, *Coinage in the Roman economy, 300 B.C. to A.D. 700* (Baltimore and London 1996), 130.

[8] Christiansen 2004, op. cit. (n. 3), 44–45.

[9] Christiansen 2004, op. cit. (n. 3), 117–119 ; L.C. West and A.C. Johnson, *Currency in Roman and Byzantine Egypt* (Princeton 1944), 178.

The most innovative feature of the Augustan system, was the regularity and abundance of its gold currency.[10] *Aurei* had a face value of 25 *denarii* and the Pompeian evidence shows that although gold coins were relatively rare (2.34% of the money supply), their face value was huge (60.70% of the total).[11]

The purity of the *aureus* remained unaffected until the mid third century. Antonine and early Severan gold was metrologically indistinguishable from Nero's post-reform gold, introduced in 64 C.E. Gold currency consisted almost exclusively of *aurei* minted with great accuracy at 45 to the pound, 7.2 g. *Aurei* from Antoninus Pius in the British Museum weigh an average 7.23 g, with a VarCo of only 2.2%; only 3.5% deviate more than 5% from the average. Caracalla's pre-debased *aurei* weigh an average 7.29 g, with a VarCo of 2.2%, only 2.3% deviate more than 5% from the average. Output plummeted after Marcus Aurelius, but the stock of *aurei* minted between 64 and 215 C.E. was huge and dominated the total supply until at least the mid third century.

In 215 Caracalla reduced the weight standard to 1/50 of a pound (average 6.57 g), which was followed until Alexander Severus. Initially quality control was very strict (none of Caracalla's debased *aurei* deviate more than 5% from the average), but it soon loosened. The average weight of Alexander's *aurei* is 6.39 g. VarCo has risen to 6.2%; 33.3% deviate more than 5% from the average, 11.1% even more than 10%.

Maximinus Thrax virtually abandoned gold coinage. Gordian III resumed it at a much lower standard and at more erratic weights. The average weight of his *aurei* is 4.89 g with a VarCo of 5.8%; 40% deviate more than 5%, 7.1% deviate more 10%. Philip's *aurei* weigh an average 4.62 g, VarCo is 7%; 39.4% deviate more than 5%, 15.2% more than 10%.

Since Gallus gold was minted at so widely different weights, that it is impossible to recognise any standard any more. Most specimens weigh less than 4 grams. Occasionally heavy *aurei* were minted and radiates that were presumably intended as double-*aurei*. Valerian took the final step of downgrading the purity down to sometimes ca. 65%.[12]

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[10] Unless otherwise stated, the data concerning weight are based on samples taken from the Hunter Coin Cabinet, the British Museum, the American Numismatic Society and auctions listed on *CoinArchives*, http://www.coinarchives.com/.

[11] R. Duncan-Jones, 'Roman coin circulation and the cities of Vesuvius', in E. Lo Cascio (ed.), *Credito e moneta nel mondo romano. Atti degli incontri capresi di storia dell'economia antica (Capri 2000)* (Bari 2003), 161–180.

[12] Bland 1996, op. cit. (n. 6), 73.

Some improvement was made under Aurelian – who restored purity to 98% – but metrological accuracy remained a distant dream. The mint of Mediolanum in 271 minted at an average of 4.53 g, with a VarCo of 10.1%; 58% deviate more than 10%. The Roman mint in 274 minted at 4.42 g with a VarCo of 9.1%; with 'only' 22.9% deviating more than 10%.[13]

This situation continued until Diocletian's reforms of 293–294 restored metrological accuracy, based on an *aureus* of 1/60 pound. None deviate more than 5%.

We do not know what the impact was of these metrologically inferior issues. Stray finds suggest that output was small, but their reliability is limited. *Aurei* from Aurelian were rare before two new large hoards showed that output was higher than was thought possible.[14] The absence of third century gold in hoards may reflect Gresham's law: 'bad' gold circulated, 'good' gold was hoarded. Taxes were paid preferably in 'bad' gold, flowing back into the mint's melting pots, while 'good' gold remained hidden in private treasuries.

Aurei seem to have been mounted in jewellery more often than before and hoarded with other gold artefacts. This might indicate that (better) gold coins ceased to have a significant surplus value over gold bullion.[15] But this could easily be caused by a small increase in the price of bullion expressed in denari or sesterces.

The effects on the functionality of the currency system may have been limited. Whereas silver currency served primarily as an everyday means of payment, gold coin had always been more prestigious and was favoured particularly for gifts signifying special esteem.[16]

At a handout in the early third century *patroni* and *quinquennales perpetui* of the *corpus piscinatorum et urinatorum* at Rome received one gold piece each, while the magistrates in charge received the formal equivalent of 25 *denarii*.[17] One of the favours Sennius Sollemnis received from his 'friend and patron' Claudius Paulinus, governor of Britain in 220 C.E.,

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[13] Data from a complete sample of R. Göbl, *Die Münzprägung des Kaisers Aurelianus (270/275)* (Wien 1993); n = 100 for Mediolanum 271, n = 70 for Rome 274.

[14] Cf. Göbl 1993, op. cit. (n. 13), 84.

[15] Cf. J.-P. Callu, *La politique monétaire des empereurs romains de 238–311* (Paris 1969), 424–430.

[16] S. Mrozek, 'À propos du "marbre de Thorigny", *salarium in auro* (*CIL* 13.3162)', *Bulletin de la Société Française de Numismatique* (1973), 335–336.

[17] *CIL* 6.29700; S. Mrozek, 'Les espèces monétaires dans les inscriptions latines du Haut-Empire', *Les dévaluations à Rome. Vol. I (Actes Rome 1975)* (Rome 1978), 85.

was that his salary was paid in gold.[18] *Aurei* set in jewellery or used as pendants elaborate on gold coins' functionality as status tokens, but this does not imply that gold coins in general lost their functionality as money tokens.

Account money

Currency was not the only form of money. Thus, army pay was not normally paid in full. The army provided a deposit, cashier and payment service to soldiers, which allowed them to buy items from the camp's workshops and storehouses through a simple transfer between accounts.[19] Papyri show it was common for private individuals to deposit money at a bank and to make and accepts payments through bankers.[20] Bankers in the west disappear from view around the middle of the third century.[21] In Egypt, however, *trapezitai* continue to operate throughout the third century, although there appears to have been a crisis in the 260's.

The continued existence of account money implies that money users had confidence that the purchasing power of the coins they received or which were paid out on their behalf was roughly that of the coins they deposited. It presupposes 'monetary' stability in spite of the manifest 'currency' instability.

Gresham's law

Denarii from the Flavians and the early Antonines disappear from circulation hoards in the late second century (presumably as an effect of reminting), but they continue to appear in saving deposits until deep

[18] *CIL* 13.3162. Cf. H. Devijver, *Prosopographia militiarum equestrium quae fuerunt ab Augusto ad Gallienum* (Leuven 1976–2001), II 729–730, IV 1718.

[19] Cf. K. Verboven, 'Good for business. The Roman army and the emergence of a 'business class' in the north-western provinces of the Roman empire', in L. de Blois and E. Lo Cascio (eds.), *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 B.C.–A.D. 476): Economic, Social, Political, Religious and Cultural Aspects.* Impact of Empire 6 (in print).

[20] Cf. R. Bogaert, 'Les documents bancaires de l'Égypte gréco-romaine et byzantine', *Ancient Society* 31 (2001), 255–258.

[21] J. Andreau, 'Declino e morte dei mestieri bancari nel Mediterraneo Occidentale (II–IV D.C.)', A. Giardina (ed.), *Società romana e impero tardoantico* (Roma – Bari 1986), 601–615; 814–818.

in the third century.[22] The occasional appearance of small numbers of 'good' old *denarii* in hoards consisting almost exclusively of later *denarii* and *antoniniani*, suggests that saving deposits were brought back into circulation whenever large payments had to be made, dowries provided or inheritances divided.

Dio Cassius' claim that Caracalla 'adulterated' the silver and gold coinage may reveal discontent over Caracalla's introduction of the *antoninianus* and the reduction of the gold standard.[23] Early Severan *denarii* dominate hoards until Gordian III, while early *antoniniani* were avoided.[24] But that does not mean that these circulated at a discount or were avoided as means of payment. Until the 250's *antoniniani* were still avoided in saving hoards, but they dominate circulation hoards.

Egyptian hoards show that Commodus's *tetradrachms* were avoided for saving purposes until the sole rule of Gallienus, when they suddenly appear in substantial numbers. Die studies suggest that Commodus' issues were large.[25] They mixed in with the mass of 'Neronian' *tetradrachms* for almost a century. Yet papyri do not show a trace of their rejection as means of payment.

These observations are well in line with Gresham's law, predicting that when coins of a reduced silver or gold content are brought into circulation at the same nominal value as coins with a significantly higher gold or silver content, the latter will be preferred for savings and exports. Gresham's law is not an indication of primitiveness. Significantly, it presupposes that legal tender laws are effective in enforcing the equal face value of 'good' and 'bad' money.[26] The reduction of the silver content of the US half-dollar in 1965 from 90% pure to 40% drove the former out of circulation.[27]

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[22] J. Van Heesch, *De muntcirculatie tijdens de Romeinse tijd in het Noordwesten van Gallia Belgica. De civitates van de Nerviërs en de Menapiërs (ca. 50 v.C. – 450 n.C.)* (Brussel 1998), 94–97; Callu 1969, op. cit. (n. 15), 248–187; Duncan-Jones 1994, op. cit. (n. 5), 200–205.

[23] Dio Cassius 78.14.4.

[24] Wolters 1999, op. cit. (n. 1), 380–381.

[25] Christiansen 2004, op. cit. (n. 3), 108–109.

[26] Cf. A.J. Rolnick and W.E. Weber, 'Gresham's Law or Gresham's Fallacy?', *Journal of political economy* 94 (1986), 185–99, 185–99; G. Selgin, 'Salvaging Gresham's Law: The Good, the Bad, and the Illegal', *Journal of money, credit, and banking* 28 (1996), 637–49. Strobel misinterprets Gresham's law (K. Strobel, "Geldwesen un Währungsgeschichte des Imperium Romanum im Spiegel der Entwicklung des 3. Jahrhunderts n.Chr.", K. Strobel (ed.), *Die Ökonomie des Imperium Romanum. Strukturen, Modelle und Wertungen im Spannungsfeld von Modernismus und Neoprimitivismus* (Stuttgart 2002), 94). For Roman legal tender laws see Arrianus, *Epictetus* 3.3.3; *Sententiae Pauli* 5.25.

[27] R.Z. Aliber, 'Gresham's law, asset preferences and the demand for international reserves', *The quarterly journal of economics* 81 (1967), 629 n. 3.

Inflation

Monetarist theory predicts that Gresham's law provokes inflation because sellers anticipate that they will be paid in 'bad' money and raise their prices in response. However, it now seems almost certain that such a 'monetary' inflation did not occur before at least the second half of the century. Papyri show price stability until ca. 274 C.E., while inscriptions indicate that at least until the 250's there was no structural inflation in the west.[28] The presence in hoards until the 260's of *denarii* alongside *antoniniani* and Antonine and early Severan *denarii* alongside younger *denarii*, indicates that it was not worthwhile for private persons to melt down these coins and consequently that the price of silver bullion had not (yet) surged.

The absence of inflation despite Gresham's law is noteworthy, but not inexplicable. It indicates that price levels were little dependent on changes in the silver currency. In part the vast purchasing power locked in gold currency may have acted as a stabiliser. Probably more important is that currency inflation is a form of demand inflation, while preindustrial economies were predominantly supply economies. Demand was usually inelastic; most consumers had little surplus to spend and transportation costs were high. Supply on the other hand was unpredictable and often irregular. Crop failures, heavy weather disrupting trade lines, epidemics, droughts etc. shook prices continuously.

Exchange rates

Dio Cassius confirms that the face value of the *aureus* under Alexander Severus was still 25 *denarii*.[29] Whether Gordian upgraded the face value of the 'Antonine' *aurei* when he introduced his own light-weight *aureus*, is not known. Some inscriptions from Nubia seem to imply that the

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[28] S. Mrozek, *Prix et rémunération dans l'occident Romain (31 av. n.è.–250 de n.è.)* (Gdansk 1975), 103–126; H.-U. von Freyberg, *Kapitalverkehr und Handel im römischen Kaiserreich (27 v. Chr.–235 n. Chr.)* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1988), 84–87; on prices doubling in late second century Egypt: D. Rathbone, 'Monetisation, not price-inflation, in third-century A.D. Egypt?' in C.E. King and D.G. Wigg (eds.) 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 334–335; Christiansen 2004, op. cit. (n. 3), 112–113.

[29] Dio Cassius 55.12.4–5; T.V. Buttrey, 'Dio, Zonaras and the value of the Roman *aureus*', *Journal of Roman Studies* 51 (1961), 40–45; Wolters 1999, op. cit. (n. 1), 346; Harl 1996, op. cit. (n. 7), 127.

aureus under Philip was sold at 43.75 *denarii*. But they are too untypical to carry much weight.[30]

However, the practice of 'fixed exchange rates' is not clear cut. An official rate of 16 *assaria* to a *denarius* is attested for Cibyra in 74 C.E. and for Syros under Severus.[31] In Pergamon under Hadrian, bankers bought *denarii* for 17 *assaria*, and sold them for 18.[32] In Ephesus in 104 C.E., an inscription stipulating handouts from the proceeds of an endowment, reckoned the *denarius* as 18 *assaria*, making a special provision in case the *kollybos* would rise. Apparently, loans out of the endowment were expressed in *denarii*, which would be changed into *assaria* for the smaller hand-outs.[33] These cases suggest that the 'official' rate of the *denarius* in Asia and the Aegean was 16 *assaria*, but that bankers charged a commission (*kollybos*) of 1 to 2 *assaria*, which could be anticipated in private transactions.

A Transylvanian tablet from 167 C.E. implies a *denarius* trading at 20 *asses*, another mentions a sum of 1/24 *denarius*.[34] The Gnomon of the Idios Logos forbids 'a coin to be changed for more than it is worth'.[35] Yet the Egyptian *tetradrachm* circulated at rates fluctuating between 24–30 bronze *obols*. In official transactions 28–30 *obols* was customary.[36]

The *aureus* was officially worth 100 Egyptian *drachmae*, but *P.Sarap* 90 (ca. 108 C.E.) mentions *aurei* which used to be sold for 15 *drachmae*, being sold for 11.[37] Presumably, the Ptolemaic custom of imposing surcharges

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[30] *CIG* 5008; 5010; Harl 1996, op. cit. (n. 7), 133; Callu 1969, op. cit. (n. 15), 445; S. Bolin, *State and currency in the Roman Empire to 300 A.D.* (Stockholm 1958), 278–281; Christiansen 2004, op. cit. (n. 3), 47; Rathbone 1996, op. cit. (n. 228), 337 n. 43.

[31] Cibyra: *IGRR* 4.915 (= J.R. Melville Jones, *Testimonia Numaria. Greek and Latin Texts concerning Ancient Greek Coinage. Vol. 1: Texts and translations* (London 1993), no. 374); Syros: *IG* 12.5 nos. 659, 663, 664 and 665.

[32] *OGIS* 484; Melville Jones 1993, op. cit. (n. 31), no. 579; R. Bogaert, *Banques et banquiers dans les cités grecques* (Leiden 1968), 231–234.

[33] *Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum* 3, 481, ll. 144–148.

[34] For the tablet see *CIL* 3, p. 950 and p. 1058; *CIL* 3.2215 (= *FIRA* 3, 481–482, no. 157); cf. M.H. Crawford, 'Money and exchange in the Roman World', *Journal of Roman Studies* 60 (1970), 43.

[35] Ν[ό]μισμα πλεον οὗ[κ] ἰσχύει οὐ[κ ἐξὸ]ν κε[ρ]ματίζειν; W.G. Uxkull-Gyllenband, *Der Gnomon des Idios Logos* (Berlin 1934), 103–104.

[36] D. Rathbone, 'Prices and price formation in Roman Egypt', in J. Andreau, P. Briant and R. Descat (eds.), *Economie antique. Prix et formation des prix dans les économies antiques* (Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges 1997), 189.

[37] = *P.Bad.* 37; cf. also *P.Sarap* 89c. See W. Weiser, 'Nomisma exitelon und nummi restituti. Die Währungspolitik des Traianus (98–117) in Realität und moderner Fiktion', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 125 (1999), 236; Strobel 2002, op. cit. (n. 26), 90.

on payments in silver for prices expressed in gold, still existed in the Roman period.[38]

The available data on divergent inter-currency rates come from areas where provincial bronze and silver were dominant. Ratios in Italy are likely to have been closer to the official rates. However, reality was probably not fundamentally different.

Scaevola mentions the case of a banker's client wishing to close his account. The banker acknowledged owing him 380,000 sesterces plus interest and a separate sum of *aurei*, which would be refunded without interest. Scaevola's words, *summa aureorum quam* (not *aureos quos*), indicate that the sum in gold was not a closed deposit but a normal bank deposit. Apparently, the banker kept separate accounts for sums in gold and sums in bronze and silver, implying that they had to be handled differently.[39] Paulus notes that a creditor could not be forced to accept payment in a different 'form' of coins (*aliam formam*) if this would be to his detriment.[40]

Officially, face values remained fixed. Florentinus claims stipulations were valid if the promised sum equalled the stipulated sum, even if the former was expressed in *aurei* and the latter in *denarii*.[41] In stead of thinking in terms of a fixed exchange rate however we should think in terms of a guaranteed nominal value, above which a premium could be set, linked to the commission charged by exchange banks. Exchange commissions in Pergamon were fixed by the city, but there was clearly no general rule. *P.Sarap* 90 shows that *strategoi* could intervene to check excesses, but they did so on an *ad hoc* basis.

The existence of variable inter-currency commissions and premiums helps to explain the strength of the Augustan system. Fluctuations in bullion value could easily be smoothed out. When the silver currency degraded, exchange commissions (the 'price' of gold coin) may simply have risen.

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[38] R. Bogaert, 'Les banques affermées Ptolémaïques', *Historia* 33 (1984), 186; in third century B.C.E. *epallagè* was 11.11% for *trichrysa*, and 4% for *mnaieia* and *pentakontadrachma*.

[39] *Digesta* 2.14.47.1.

[40] *Digesta* 46.3.99; Wolters's view (1999, op. cit. (n. 1), 359) that this refers to 'Provinzialprägungen' is not convincing; if these enjoyed legal tender throughout the empire, there could be no *damnum* in a legal sense, if they did not, the rule would be superfluous.

[41] *Digesta* 45.1.65.praefatio 1; cf. Volusius Maecianus, *Assis distributio* 44.

A crucial role was played by bankers. As long as bankers could be relied upon to accept coins at face value plus a reasonable commission, the actual bullion value of coins was irrelevant. The administration did not have the means to enforce nominal values in private transactions, but control on professional bankers was easy. Not coincidentally, the Athenian legal tender law of 375/374 B.C.E. focused on *dokimastai*.[42] In Rome as well in 85 B.C.E. Gratidianus focused on *nummularii* to remedy a monetary crisis.[43]

Currency discontent

A famous papyrus from Oxyrhynchus from 260 C.E. shows exchange bankers closing in order to avoid having to change the 'imperial money'. The *strategos* ordered the exchange bankers to reopen and accept all genuine coins and warned businessmen to do the same.[44] In 266 C.E. we find for the first time transactions being expressed in 'Ptolemaeic' or 'old silver' as opposed to 'new silver'.[45] 'Commodian' *tetradrachms* now begin to turn up in significant numbers in hoards. There is no indication, however, that 'old' silver circulated at a premium. One papyrus (from 289 C.E.) indicates that at least in some cases loans expressed in 'Ptolemaic' silver could be repaid in the same amount of 'new' silver.[46] These data indicate discontent with the debased currency of Gallienus and his successors. As the heterogeneity of the currency increased, bankers found it increasingly difficult to buy gold and 'old' silver. Presumably, local regulations limited their possibility to raise exchange commissions.

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[42] R.S. Stroud, 'An Athenian law on silver coinage', *Hesperia* 43 (1974), 157–188; E.D. Tai, '"Ancient greenbacks": Athenian owls, the law of Nikophon, and the Greek economy', *Historia* 54 (2005), 359–381.

[43] Cf. Verboven 1994, op. cit. (n. 2); Lo Cascio 1996, op. cit. (n. 1), 278–279; M.H. Crawford, 'The edict of M. Marius Gratidianus', *Proceedings of the Cambridge philological society* n.s. 14 (1968), 1–4.

[44] *P.Oxy* 12 (1916) 1411; Bogaert 1968, op. cit. (n. 32), 33; R. Bogaert, 'Les kollubistikai trapezai dans l'Egypte gréco-romaine', *Trapezitica Aegyptiaca* (Firenze 1994), 109–112; T. Pekary, 'Studien zur römischen Währungs- und Finanzgeschichte von 161 bis 235 n. Chr.', *Historia* 8 (1959), 470–471; Bolin 1958, op. cit. (n. 30), 287–288.

[45] Rathbone 1996, op. cit. (n 28), 336–337; E. Christiansen, 'On *denarii* and other coin-terms in the papyri', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 54 (1984), 295–299; Christiansen 2004, op. cit. (n. 3), 119–120.

[46] *P.Oxy* 31 (1966) 2587.

Aurelian

Around 274 C.E. papyri document a sudden tenfold increase in prices.[47] The change is so abrupt and huge that it cannot have been merely an Egyptian phenomenon. Remarkably, prices afterwards again stabilised until Diocletian's reform in 296 C.E. Bankers and money-lenders as well continue to appear in papyri.

Such a phenomenal leap preceded and followed by price stability, cannot seriously be attributed to inflation. It indicates a devaluation by imperial decree and must be tied to Aurelian's currency reform. Many theories have been made about this reform, particularly concerning the meaning of the XXI mark on the new silver-clad radiate (the *aurelianianus*) and its relation to the *aureus*. The source material is too meagre and ambiguous to go into to these theories here. Most likely, however, the face value of the *aureus* was drastically altered, perhaps with the additional prevision that inter-currency commissions and premiums would fluctuate according to weight. The XXI mark as well probably refers to a new face value attributed to the *antoninianus*.

Aurelian's reform heralded a new era. From now on, the central denomination in the monetary system, was not a silver coin – however much debased – but a silver-clad coin. The system he devised was not merely a quantitative improvement of the horrible coinage of the 250–260's, but was a qualitatively different system, with different nominal values and exchange rates.

Significantly, however, Aurelian did not change the material aspects of currency or exchange practices. His new radiates appeared simply as an improvement on the radiates in circulation, his *aureus* as an improvement on those in circulation.

The monetary stability documented in the Egyptian papyri between 275–296 C.E. shows that the reform worked. Although it undoubtedly impoverished those who had savings in silver or bronze, it did not affect those with savings in gold or kind. Whether it succeeded in drawing back gold currency into circulation – if that was the intention – is hard to tell. Stray finds of *aurei* minted since the 260's appear to increase, which might indicate an increased circulation since the 270's. But, the numbers are too low to constitute more than a hint.[48]

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[47] Rathbone 1996, op. cit. (n. 28), 335–338.
[48] Bland 1996, op. cit. (n. 6), 91.

Diocletian

The breakdown of monetary stability came only after Diocletian's reforms. Curiously the Price Edict lists gold coin as a commodity, setting a maximum price of 72,000 d.c. per pound (1200 d.c. per *aureus*). This does not imply that gold coins did not enjoy a guaranteed nominal value, but that exchange commissions and surcharges were allowed to fluctuate. Perhaps the provision was intended to prevent competition between the old and new *aurei*.

The half-hearted attempt to reintroduce the Neronian *denarius* – now called *argenteus* – which had been so successful before, and the choice made in favour of the silver-clad *nummus*, which replaced Aurelian's radiate as the central denomination, is remarkable. To argue that mass production of the *nummus* required so much silver that not enough was left for the *argenteus* is circular reasoning. Why did Diocletian not opt for the Augustan solution, combining a high value *argenteus*, with supplementary denominations in bronze?

Whatever the details of the reform, monetary instability ensued; inflation soared. In 301 Diocletian reacted by fixing maximum prices and issuing a currency decree doubling the face value of at least the *argenteus* and the *nummus*. Both attempts failed miserably.

Why did a reform that produced intrinsically more valuable and more handsome coins turn so fast into total disaster? The main difference with Aurelian's reforms is that Diocletian completely threw over board the existing currency system. Familiar radiate 'silver' largely disappeared in the imperial melting-pots. The Neronian *denarius* had disappeared too long ago to lend trust to the *argenteus*, while the *nummus* was virtually an innovation *ex nihilo*. The public reacted by hoarding the *argenteus* because of its silver-purity, and avoiding or discounting the *nummus* because of its obvious overvaluation. Both features had existed previously, in the Augustan system (the pure silver *denarius*) and the Aurelian system (the silver-clad radiate), but never as parts of a single currency system. The reform failed because it lacked the support of tradition and habit.

Ghent, August 2006

CRISIS AND THE EMPEROR

L'IDENTITÉ DU PRINCE FACE À LA CRISE : CONSTRUCTION D'UN DISCOURS ET USAGE DE LA *MEMORIA*

Stéphane Benoist

La mise en place du principat s'est accompagnée de la nécessaire définition d'une nouvelle fonction au cœur des institutions de la *respublica*. C'est cette *statio principis* d'essence augustéenne qui s'avère l'enjeu majeur des constructions successives d'un Empire en constante évolution. Le pouvoir impérial s'est affermi et s'est donné les moyens d'accéder à une pérennité, souvent illusoire dans les faits, par le biais d'une sacralisation progressive de la fonction, plutôt que de la personne du prince. Fondée sur les ressorts d'une philosophie politique très largement partagée au sein des élites – ce stoïcisme impérial que certains des acteurs du pouvoir aux deux premiers siècles du principat pratiquent comme un art de vivre quelles que puissent être les contradictions et conciliations nécessaires au quotidien, d'un Sénèque à un Marc Aurèle –,[1] la légitimité impériale se renforce au-delà des vicissitudes d'une histoire politique confrontée aux périls conjoints des barbares et de la guerre civile. Un très large troisième siècle, des derniers Antonins au règne de Constantin, nous offre l'opportunité de mettre en parallèle les linéaments d'un discours politique conjuguant légitimité et sacralité et la conception romaine d'une mémoire-monument que l'on peut apprécier au travers de discours faits de mots et d'images.

Une figure et quelques mots puisés aux origines du régime vont me permettre d'ouvrir cette réflexion qui ne sera plus fondée, par la suite, que sur des sources exclusivement contemporaines de la période retenue pour cette recherche. On ne peut s'étonner qu'un texte de référence pour tout historien qui s'attache aux procédures de condamnation de la mémoire des individus, le très fameux *Senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone*, fasse tout à la fois référence à la *statio pro republica* et à la *memoria* de

[1] Dans cette perspective, S. Benoist, «Les rapports sociaux dans l'œuvre de Sénèque: l'homme dans la cité», dans M. Molin (ed.), *Les régulations sociales dans l'Antiquité* (Rennes 2006), 55–70 et «Marc Aurèle, un prince philosophe face à la guerre», dans P. Martin et S. Simiz (eds.), *L'empreinte de la guerre*. De la Grice classique à la Tchitchinic (Paris 2006), 277–285.

Germanicus.[2] En un temps de réflexions sur le contenu propre de la charge impériale, entre identité civile et fonction militaire, «impératorienne», sous le règne du premier successeur d'Auguste dont les hésitations reflètent pour les modernes cette ambiguïté native du principat, il est particulièrement significatif de relever ces deux emplois parallèles de la *statio* et de la *memoria* sur un *monumentum* voté en assemblée sénatoriale. Dès lors, deux siècles plus tard, la présence de la *memoria* de Germanicus sur le *feriale Duranum* consacre cette approche romaine d'un temps long destiné à commémorer une *domus Augusti/a* qui se joue des changements dynastiques.[3]

L'essentiel est ailleurs, une conscience aiguë des fondements de la légitimité qui se compose d'attitudes, de discours et d'images. En période de transition entre un modèle tétrarchique contesté et la réaffirmation du principe dynastique par Constantin, au-delà d'une simple filiation recomposée de Constance Chlore à Claude le Gothique, il va de soi que le panégyriste puise en 310 dans le registre de la mémoire pour asseoir une autorité: *tua de memoria patris auctoritas*.[4] C'est en partant de quelques déclinaisons du bon prince, des Sévères à la Tétrarchie, que je pourrai juger des enseignements fournis par des empereurs à contre-emploi; puis, j'insisterai sur la construction d'une sacralité en interrogeant titulatures et évocation de la *memoria*; avant de conclure sur un discours en images qui remet *in fine* l'empereur Auguste au centre de toute perception de la *statio principis*, en temps de paix comme de crise.

Les figures du bon prince

Comme le souligne le Pseudo-Mamertin en 291, la rhétorique de l'éloge s'impose à tous, récipiendaires et déclamateurs, comme un monument permettant d'atteindre à l'éternité, d'affronter tous les temps: *Quanto*

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[2] Cf. W. Eck, A. Caballos Rufino und F. Fernández, *Das Senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone Patre* (München 1996); *CIL*, 2^2/5.900 (= *AE*, 1996, no. 885): lignes 129–130 *(pro r. p. stationis)* et 8, 68–70, 137–138, 155–156 et 165–166, pour tous les usages de la *memoria* dans le texte.

[3] *Feriale Duranum* 2.12–13. Au 24 mai, *natalis Germanici*; S. Benoist, «L'usage de la *memoria* des Sévères à Constantin: notes d'épigraphie et d'histoire», *Rencontres franco-italiennes d'épigraphie* (Londres à paraître).

[4] 7(6).16.9. Pour le texte des panégyristes, É.Galletier (ed.), *Panégyriques Latins* (Paris 1949–1955). Le numéro entre parenthèses correspond à l'édition de R.A.B. Mynors (ed.), *XII Panegyrici Latini* (Oxford 1964).

laude ac sempiterna memoria digniora![5] Trois échos des années 220–250 nous permettent de mesurer la dualité des figures de l'*imperator* et du *ciuilis princeps* en jugeant de l'impact des situations de crise dans les modèles épidictiques.[6] Je retiens le récit du règne de Macrin par Dion Cassius, le témoignage d'Hérodien qui, en tant que témoin oculaire, se place des Sévères à Philippe et dont on peut lire le portrait de ce dernier prince en filigrane dans certains propos se rapportant à Macrin; enfin, le Pseudo-Aelius Aristide que l'analyse de son *En honneur de l'empereur* conduit à placer à la même date; le Ménandre le Rhéteur du *Basilikos logos* offre en dernier lieu l'opportunité de faire le lien avec les objectifs renouvelés d'un discours tétrarchique de commémoration.

La question parthe permet de mesurer les retournements de situations et certains éloges à contre-temps. C'est ainsi une constante, de Lucius Verus à Macrin, que de lire dans nos sources des jeux de miroir entre bons princes et réputations ternies. Hérodien, en rappelant la situation face à l'ennemi héréditaire au-delà de l'Euphrate, cite les noms d'Auguste, Trajan, Lucius Verus et Septime Sévère, en préambule au contexte des années 230.[7] De l'aptitude à s'adresser aux soldats à la conduite mesurée des armées dans l'engagement comme dans la conclusion de traités, cette division naturelle des règnes entre temps de paix et temps de guerre s'impose à la narration des historiens rapportant les faits, comme à celle des panégyristes construisant leur éloge en fonction des vertus afférentes.[8] L'adresse aux soldats est un moment privilégié de l'exposition des qualités du prince, Hérodien offrant ainsi trois discours aux fortes résonances idéologiques: Septime Sévère avant l'engagement contre Clodius Albinus, Macrin avant d'affronter les Parthes, enfin Maximin à l'orée du *bellum Aquileiensis*.[9] Remarquable également est le jugement d'un Dion Cassius, plutôt réservé quand il s'agit d'évoquer le règne de ce premier chevalier directement parvenu à la pourpre, qui qualifie le premier discours de Macrin aux soldats

[5] Pseudo-Mamertin, 3(11).10.1. Présentation judicieuse du panégyrique par R. Rees, *Layers of Loyalty in Latin Panegyric A.D. 289–307* (Oxford 2002), 68–94.

[6] En renvoyant à la synthèse de L. de Blois, 'Emperor and Empire in the Works of Greek Speaking Authors of the Third Century A.D.', *ANRW* 2.34.4, 3391–3443.

[7] Hérodien 6.2.4.

[8] Ménandre le Rhéteur, 372.25–375.4. Pour une réflexion d'ensemble, L. Pernot, *La Rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-romain* (Paris 1993), particulièrement 134–178 et 659–762.

[9] Hérodien 3.6.1–7 (Septime Sévère), 4.14.4–7 (Macrin), 7.8.4–8 (Maximin).

lors de sa proclamation de «long et excellent».[10] De fait, les *principia historiae* de Fronton ont fourni l'exemple d'un éloge inattendu des mérites d'un Lucius Verus, de retour victorieux du front parthe, qui se retrouve meilleur que l'*optimus princeps* Trajan et peut en remontrer au trop vertueux Marc Aurèle.[11] Les enjeux de tels propos sont au cœur des débats ayant conduit aux diverses propositions d'identification de l'empereur loué par le Pseudo-Aristide. Un prince négociateur ou combattant encourt des jugements fort différents, du portrait négatif d'un Macrin manquant de *uirtus* et couvert de honte en refusant le titre de *parthicus* faute d'avoir combattu, à son auto-célébration dans la lettre au Sénat réécrite par Hérodien.[12] Le doublet Macrin/Philippe permet à mon sens de renforcer l'argumentation pour une datation de l'éloge impérial au règne de l'Arabe: Hérodien évoque très allusivement le traité de paix avec Artaban après un combat incertain tandis que le panégyriste semble gloser Fronton en abordant la discipline militaire et l'entraînement à la guerre d'une part, puis l'usage favorable de la délibération d'autre part.[13]

La figure du *ciuilis princeps* au troisième siècle permet d'envisager les modèles du bon prince véhiculés par la tradition, notamment Marc Aurèle dont Hérodien peut vanter en ouverture de ses *Histoires* les qualités: ce philosophe imité par ses sujets dont le discours-testament souligne la modération et la bonté et célèbre l'«éternel souvenir de sa vertu».[14] À l'avènement de Macrin, deux identités en regard prolongent l'éloge du souverain idéal: le chevalier porté à l'Empire par ses troupes cite dans une lettre au Sénat ses références, Marc et Pertinax, et fait le panégyrique de ses propres vertus, d'honnêteté, de douceur, d'humanité et de bonté que les princes aux nobles origines ne sont pas seuls à détenir.[15] On peut s'étonner que le sénateur Dion Cassius en un jugement final sur cet empereur, plus nuancé que prévu, loue l'*arrêté* du préfet du prétoire et son expérience politique mais blâme en

[10] Dion Cassius 78.12.1.

[11] N. Méthy, «Une critique de l'*optimus princeps*. Trajan dans les *Principia historiae* de Fronton», *Museum Helveticum* 60 (2003), 105–123.

[12] Dion Cassius 78.27.1–3; Hérodien 5.1.

[13] Hérodien 4.15.7–9; Pseudo-Aristide, 30 & 32–35. En partant de L. de Blois, 'The Εἰς Βασιλέα of Ps-Aelius Aristides', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 27 (1986), 279–288 avec le résumé des propositions d'identifications par L. Pernot, *Éloges grecs de Rome* (Paris 1997), 171–183.

[14] Hérodien 1.2.3–4 et 4.2–6.

[15] Hérodien 5.1.

lui cette incapacité à favoriser un sénateur pour succéder à Caracalla.[16] Le prince célébré par le pseudo-Aristide évoque précisément, à mots couverts, ces préfets déjà voués à leur tâche avant même d'y parvenir et dont l'action est tout entière dictée par l'intérêt pour l'empire.[17] Les discours d'éloge se fondent sur des *topoi* rhétoriques, l'accessibilité du souverain, l'étendue de ses vertus, mais sont rarement dépourvus d'enseignements proprement historiques, par exemple en ce qui nous concerne les passages évoquant dans les *panégyriques* la figure du *priuatus* et la *statio principis*.[18] Dès lors, la mémoire de Caracalla durant le bref règne de Macrin nous apparaît chargée d'ambiguïtés et d'enjeux politiques: de l'absence de toute référence au défunt souverain, ni positive ni négative, selon Dion un simple *imperator* ni *diuus* ni *hostis publicus*, à la commémoration d'une mémoire que le nouveau prince ne pouvait bafouer, exaltant même opportunément dans son discours aux soldats les grandes actions et les liens tissés par son prédécesseur avec eux.[19] C'est ainsi qu'une lecture attentive de l'*Ad edictum praetoris* (livres 61–73) d'Ulpien permet d'envisager plusieurs phases de composition et de rédaction et confirme cet entre-deux des années 217–218 durant lequel père et fils, désormais unis dans la mort, sont mentionnés dans l'ordre chronologique (*ab imperatore Seuero et Antonino*), le premier n'étant plus le *diuus pater eius* qu'il était du vivant de son fils aîné.[20]

Ces hésitations de nos sources, que l'incertitude des temps peut expliquer autant que la fragilité des réputations et mémoires impériales,[21] trouvent une forme de résolution tardive. Avec la construction tétrarchique, l'empereur endosse tout à la fois les vêtures du prince civil et du combattant, se donne une stature universelle de *parens generis humani*, en recyclant désormais officiellement dans les titulatures des actes

[16] Dion Cassius 78.40.3 et 78.41.

[17] Pseudo-Aristide 13–14. Pour le texte du Pseudo-Aristide, B. Keil (ed.), *Aelii Aristidis Smyrnaei quae supersunt omnia*. Vol. 2 (Berlin 1958), *oratio* 35.13–14, avec la traduction française de Pernot 1997, op. cit. (n. 13).

[18] Figures de style et histoire, d'Hérodien aux panégyristes: L. de Blois, 'The Perception of Roman Imperial Authority in Herodian's Work', dans L. de Blois et al. (eds.), *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power.* Impact of Empire 3 (Amsterdam 2003), 148–156, et R. Rees, 'The Private Lives of Public Figures in Latin Prose Panegyric', dans M. Withby (ed.), *The Propaganda of Power. The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (Leiden 1998), 77–101.

[19] Dion Cassius 78.17.2; Hérodien 4.14.5.

[20] T. Honoré, *Ulpian* (Oxford 2002² [1982]), 158–176, particulièrement 169–171.

[21] Exposé de L. de Blois dans 'The Third Century Crisis and the Greek Elite in the Roman Empire', *Historia*, 33.3 (1984), 358–377.

normatifs des formules testées des décennies auparavant – par exemple dès Caracalla, qualifié en Bretagne de *bono generis humani imperans* (*RIB* 1265, *Bremenium*) –, que les rhéteurs peuvent incorporer dans leurs adresses (*O perpetui parentes et domini generis humani*).[22] Le préambule de l'*edictum Diocletiani de pretiis rerum uenalium* offre à cet égard un exemple exceptionnel, insuffisamment étudié pour lui-même, d'une auto-célébration impériale qui recherche, semble-t-il, l'approbation des lecteurs. On peut en détacher, après le formulaire classique des titulatures des tétrarques, quelques mentions significatives: l'expression d'un monde en paix et la dimension récurrente de l'universel, le rapport à la loi et la relation privilégiée avec les soldats (*bellorum memoria*).[23] L'humanité des princes, du pseudo-Aristide à Ménandre, des panégyristes aux rédacteurs officiels des chancelleries impériales, traduit une lecture de la *statio principis* fondée sur le temps long, au-delà des affrontements et des sanctions politiques, qui favorise les accents d'une sacralité dont nous pouvons juger désormais des variations de son contenu.

Titulatures et memoria: construction d'une sacralité

Il est possible de suivre les cheminements de la rhétorique officielle, d'une construction progressive des figures du prince et des membres de la *domus Augusta*, en prenant en compte les variations de formulaire consécutives aux interventions des «correcteurs» de la mémoire, ces agents du martelage des inscriptions tout comme ceux chargés de retoucher les images impériales.[24] En ce sens, la condamnation des princes déchus, devenue aussi régulière que leur promotion *post mortem* au rang de *diui* et *diuae*, me semble fournir quelques jalons à un dis-

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[22] *Panégyrique* 4(8).20.1 en 297. Pour un premier recensement, A. Chastagnol, «Le formulaire de l'épigraphie latine officielle dans l'antiquité tardive», dans A. Donati (ed.), *La terza età dell' epigrafia* (Faenza 1988) 11–65, particulièrement 25–26.

[23] Une première lecture par S. Corcoran, *The Empire of the Tetrarchs. Imperial pronouncements and government A.D. 284–324* (Oxford 2000² [1996]), 207–213.

[24] Ces réflexions prennent place dans le cadre d'un programme du Centre Glotz (Paris) portant sur «Les victimes de la *damnatio memoriae*» (S. Benoist et S. Lefebvre dir.). Pour un premier aperçu, lire les actes d'une table-ronde sur «Condamnations et damnation: approches des modalités de réécriture de l'histoire», *Cahiers du Centre Gustave-Glotz* 14 (2003 [2005]), 227–310, particulièrement S. Benoist, «Martelage et *damnatio memoriae*: une introduction», 231–240 et 15 (2004 [2006]), 173–253, en part. S. Benoist, «Titulatures impériales et *damnatio memoriae*: l'enseignement des inscriptions martelées», 175–189.

cours sans cesse en mutation. Je retiendrai, comme première expression des variations de la commémoration de l'identité impériale, le cas des princesses syriennes, une situation exemplaire pour ces femmes de la famille sévérienne en ces années que j'ai privilégiées précédemment, du règne de Caracalla à celui de Sévère Alexandre.[25] Deux formulations peuvent être relevées comme prolongement à nos réflexions antérieures: la séquence *mater castrorum, senatus et patriae* d'une part, et l'apparition avec Iulia Mammaea d'une *mater uniuersi generis humani*.[26] Dans le premier cas, je formule l'hypothèse d'une concordance des temps: à savoir l'*abolitio memoriae* d'une princesse et l'insertion d'une nouvelle séquence de titres qui rend compte, fort à propos, des progrès de l'exaltation du rôle des *Augustae* au sein de la *domus* impériale. La réunion en une seule formule des camps, du sénat et de la patrie s'observe à propos de Iulia Domna sur des monuments dont le plus ancien serait l'inscription de l'arc des argentiers du *forum boarium*.[27] Sur ce monument, inscription, panneaux de la baie occidentale et groupe statuaire en bronze furent retouchés. Il s'agit là des conséquences des condamnations successives de Plautien et Plautilla en 205, puis de Géta fin 211, avec une application étendue courant 212.[28] Toutefois, à ma connaissance, aucune inscription non corrigée ne fait état d'un tel titre pour la femme de Septime Sévère avant les mois qui ont suivi la mort tragique de son fils cadet.[29] Si, depuis Faustine, les impératrices sont souvent mères des princes et des camps, comme Iulia Domna en 203,[30] si la formule mère du sénat et de la patrie s'insère dans la titulature de cette dernière en 211–212, quand doit-on dater l'apparition de la séquence complète? Une première correction du monument romain intervenant en 205, certains ont rapporté cette nouvelle formulation à cette date. Rien ne permet

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[25] Cf. E. Kettenhofen, *Die syrischen Augustae in der historischen Überlieferung* (Bonn 1979).

[26] *CIL* 2.3413, *Carthago Noua*, prolongement naturel des décisions prises en l'honneur des empereurs eux-mêmes (cf. Caracalla *supra*).

[27] *CIL* 6.1035 = 31232 (*ILS* 426), en se reportant à la récente étude d'A. Daguet-Gagey, «L'arc des argentiers à Rome», *Revue Historique* 635 (2005), 499–520, que je suivrai à l'exclusion d'une datation en 205 de toutes les corrections du texte.

[28] Pour le contexte de ces années 205–212: A. Birley, *Septimius Severus, The African Emperor* (Londres 1999[3] [1971]), 161–165, 188–189 et notes 253–254, 256; M. Christol, *L'empire romain du IIIe siècle. Histoire politique (192–325 ap. J.-C.)* (Paris 1997), 35–38 et notes 64–65.

[29] Je renvoie au dépouillement de W. Kuhoff, 'Iulia Aug. Mater Aug. N. et Castrorum et Senatus et Patriae', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 97 (1993), 259–271.

[30] *CIL* 6.220 (*ILS* 2163), ligne 2, au 1er mars, inscription d'une centurie de la 4e cohorte de vigiles.

toutefois de le confirmer. De plus, nous savons par Dion et Hérodien que Plautilla et Plautius son frère en exil n'ont été exécutés qu'après la mort de Septime Sévère, et probablement l'élimination de Géta.[31] Je crois donc que rien ne permet de rejeter une correction en 212 et le passage à cette date seulement de *Iulia Aug(usta) Mater Augg(ustorum) et castrorum* à *Iulia Aug(usta) Mater Aug(usti) N(ostri) et castrorum et senatus et patriae*.

Cette séquence, devenue la norme jusqu'à la mort de Iulia Domna en 217,[32] nous informe de la conjonction entre *abolitio* de la mémoire de Plautilla, réécriture orientée des formulaires et affirmation d'une identité qui scelle certaines évolutions majeures durant le règne de Septime Sévère: fondation d'une dynastie, réaffirmation du pouvoir civil et militaire conjoint du *princeps*, équilibre fragile de la légitimité du pouvoir impérial entre armée et sénat. D'autres évolutions des formules conclusives ou introductives des titulatures impériales mettent l'accent sur les choix opérés par les princes et les relais assurés par une épigraphie plus ou moins officielle. On peut se limiter à une période de transition que certains de nos auteurs ont vécu plus ou moins directement, d'Hérodien au Pseudo-Aristide, de Philippe l'Arabe à Trajan Dèce. Un petit sondage permet de rendre compte des accents majeurs de cette rhétorique de l'éloge.[33] Que le nouveau Trajan insère, entre les mentions de son grand pontificat et ses puissances tribuniciennes, l'expression *princeps optimus* voire *optimus maximusque princeps* ne saurait nous surprendre.[34] Que Philippe et son fils s'affirment *restitutores orbis totius* et des échos du contexte militaire (de nature essentiellement diplomatique) autant que religieux (avec le millénaire) sont ainsi perceptibles.[35] La formule conclusive d'une inscription de Dacie sous Dèce permet de prendre la mesure du chemin parcouru, des Sévères aux tétrarques, et de confirmer le passage des formulaires, depuis les textes rédigés par des membres de l'administration impériale jusqu'aux expressions officielles

[31] Dion Cassius 77.6.3 et 78.1.1; Hérodien 3.13.2–3 et 3.4.6.3.

[32] Comme à Lambèse, au 15 mars 217, dans une dédicace du collège des *cultores* de Iarhibôl nouvellement constitué: *AE* 1967, no. 572, lignes 4–7.

[33] À partir des dépouillements d'A. Chastagnol 1988, op. cit. (n. 22) et en se fondant sur ceux de M. Peachin, *Roman Imperial Titulature and Chronology, A.D. 235–284* (Amsterdam 1990).

[34] Peachin 1990, Traianus Decius nos. 159 et 160 (*CIL* 2.4958 et 4957 (*ILS* 517)), milliaires de Tarraconaise.

[35] Peachin 1990, Philippus Arabs no. 244 (*AE* 1888, no. 8 = *CIL* 3.8031 (*ILS* 510) = *IDR* 2.324, *Romula*).

d'un discours identitaire: le prince devient ici le *reparator disciplinae militaris fundator sacrae Urbis firmator spei Romanae*; les liens naturels avec la cité de Rome, l'armée et une identité romaine s'en trouvent affirmés.[36] Le *conditor* ou bien le prince en quête d'éternité (Philippe étant qualifié par exemple de *perpetuus*) sont des figures de commémoration que j'ai étudiées dans le cadre urbain.[37] Je terminerai, avant de reprendre quelques expressions de la mémoire impériale tirées du *code théodosien*, par deux formulations grecques de l'universalité sous la conduite des princes: en Lycie pour Philippe et en Syrie et Arabie pour ce dernier et son fils qui sont célébrés comme σωτὴρ τῆς οἰκουμένης et οἱ δεσπόται τῆς οἰκουμένης.[38]

Le caractère sacré du prince s'est ainsi renforcé peu à peu, des essais jugés tyranniques d'un Domitien *sacratissimus* aux constitutions sacrées d'un Commode mentionnées par Ulpien au *Digeste*.[39] Un sondage effectué dans le livre 16 du *Codex Theodosianus* s'avère très révélateur dans notre perspective.[40] Certes, ces lois religieuses, dont la plupart datent de la dernière partie du quatrième siècle et des premières décennies du cinquième, rendent compte de l'assimilation du *crimen maiestatis* au *sacrilegium* dans un contexte bien différent. Ce qui ressort toutefois de ces lois, qui imposent des limites aux pratiques cultuelles païennes et combattent hérésies et schismes chrétiens, est l'expression de la *diua memoria* des princes, par exemple celle de Constantin évoquée en ces termes en août 435 ou bien sous Constance et Julien en décembre 356, et une certaine confusion entretenue entre le *diuinum iudicium* de l'empereur et cette *diuina lex* qui fait référence désormais à Dieu.[41] Assurément, nous dépassons les limites chronologiques de notre étude et les critères que nous nous étions fixés, à savoir l'usage des seules

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[36] *IDR* 2.639.

[37] S. Benoist, «Le prince en sa ville: *conditor, pater patriae* et *divi filius*», dans N. Bilayehe (ed.), *Rome, les Césars et la Ville aux deux premiers siècles de notre ère* (Rennes 2001), 23–49; *Idem, Rome, le prince et la Cité. Pouvoir impérial et cérémonies publiques (Ier siècle av.–début du IVe siècle ap. J.-C.)* (Paris 2005), chap. VII et VIII.

[38] *SEG* 17.613 (en Lycie), *AE* 1908, no. 274 (en Syrie), *IGRR* 3.1197 (Philippopolis en Arabie).

[39] *Digesta* 26.7.5.5 (*Ad edictum praetoris*).

[40] Se référer en dernier lieu au volume des «Sources chrétiennes» 497, *Les lois religieuses des Empereurs romains de Constantin à Théodose II. I Code Théodosien XVI* (Paris 2005), notes de R. Delmaire.

[41] *Codex Theodosianus* 16.5.66 en août 435, *lege diuae memoriae Constantini*; 16.2.14 en décembre 356, *diui principis, id est nostri…genitoris*; 16.2.35 en février 405; 16.2.25 en février 380.

sources contemporaines. Mais ce terme est bien, à propos du pouvoir normatif du prince, de l'identification de la loi et de l'empereur, un écho de l'identité sacralisée du *princeps*: la violation de la loi est assimilée à un refus d'obéissance au prince.[42]

Épilogue: un discours en images, Licinius contre Constantin

Je me propose de conclure brièvement ce petit parcours des discours et représentations du pouvoir impérial au troisième siècle en choisissant après les sources littéraires, épigraphiques et juridiques d'interroger les images, c'est-à-dire la statuaire impériale, afin de rendre compte des options diverses privilégiées à la fin de notre période et revenir ainsi aux expressions les plus traditionnelles de la mise en scène du pouvoir, en notant toutefois inflexions et permanences. De nombreuses études ont renouvelé dans les dernières années notre approche de la statuaire tardo-antique et, en particulier, des modèles tétrarchiques et constantiniens.[43] Point n'est besoin d'insister sur l'importance, au sein d'une période riche en éliminations de diverses natures et donc en condamnation de la mémoire des princes et des membres de leur famille – par le martelage des inscriptions et les mutilations/transformations de leurs statues –,[44] de cet échange plus ou moins violent que les différents compétiteurs entretiennent au travers des portraits, chacun étant attentif à s'inscrire dans une tradition idéologique par le choix des mots et des images. J'ai retenu la lecture très convaincante que R. Smith propose de l'affrontement par images interposées de Licinius et Constantin, le premier s'inscrivant volontairement dans le courant tétrarchique, le second revisitant la *memoria* augustéenne.[45] Il est remarquable, à trois

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[42] *Codex Theodosianus* 1.6.9 en 385 : « Il ne convient pas de discuter une décision impériale. Mettre en doute celui qu'aurait choisi l'empereur est l'équivalent d'un sacrilège ». Sur cette dimension du pouvoir normatif du prince et la conception de sa sacralité, S. Benoist, « Le prince, *magister legum*: réflexions sur la figure du législateur dans la Rome impériale », dans P. Sineux (ed.), *Le législateur et la loi dans l'Antiquité. Hommage à Françoise Ruzé* (Caen 2005), 225–240.

[43] État de la question par F. Baratte, « Observations sur le portrait romain à l'époque tétrarchique », *Antiquité Tardive* 3 (1995), 65–76.

[44] Avec les dernières études d'E. Varner: 'Portraits, Plots and Politics: *Damnatio Memoriae* and the Images of Imperial Women', *MAAR* 46 (2001), 41–93 ; *Idem, Mutilation and Transformation: Damnatio Memoriae and Roman Imperial Portraiture* (Leiden 2004).

[45] R. Smith, 'The Public Image of Licinius I: Portrait Sculpture and Imperial Ideology in the Early Fourth Century', *Journal of Roman Studies* 87 (1997), 170–202.

siècles et demi de distance, de retrouver les accents de la guerre civile des dernières décennies avant notre ère et les modalités de ce «pouvoir des images» naguère étudié par P. Zanker.[46]

Si les grands traits de l'évolution de la sculpture dans la seconde moitié du troisième siècle sont bien relevés, mais diversement appréciés, dans un contexte plus large par une histoire de l'art partagée entre Antiquité et Moyen Âge, le projet tétrarchique est le plus souvent étudié dans une perspective idéologique précise que l'on replace dans la lecture politique de ce nouvel empire et que l'on nourrit par une analyse de témoignages littéraires plus empreints de lieux communs que de réalisme (*concordia/similitudo*).[47] Le portrait de Licinius, découvert tout près du théâtre d'Éphèse et qui est à Vienne depuis 1897, appartient à une statue colossale probablement localisée dans une niche du mur de scène. Une autre copie d'un même portrait a été trouvée dans la basilique de l'agora romaine de Smyrne en 1950.[48] Je retiens du commentaire de Smith l'essentiel, à savoir une représentation traditionnelle d'un tétrarque, toutefois identifiable par quelques particularités remarquables: il s'agit d'un portrait réaliste d'un homme déjà âgé, portant cheveux et barbe d'un type appartenant à la représentation classique du soldat en campagne, le sourire pouvant donner à l'ensemble un peu sévère une bienveillance qui traduirait des vertus propres d'accessibilité. Ainsi, se trouvent tout à la fois représentés sur ce portrait une *statio principis*, plus que l'identité personnelle du souverain, avec les caractéristiques tétrarchiques (frontalité, regard), mais également quelques traits personnels, le sourire notamment, qui autorisent une identification s'éloignant de la simple perspective collective, ce que confirme cette précision du Pseudo-Mamertin soulignant à propos de Dioclétien et Maximien leur *non uultuum similitudo sed morum*.[49] Ceci nous place certes dans un registre normatif politico-moral qui insiste sur l'ordre, la discipline, le respect des lois, avec une réaffirmation du modèle de Dioclétien, corpulence, figure massive, âge avancé. Toutefois, le sourire peut être rapproché d'expressions relevées à la fin de la République, chez Pompée, César, ou Marc Antoine. La sévérité ou l'impassibilité laisse la place à une accessibilité

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[46] P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor 1990² [1988]).

[47] Outre les références déjà citées de Baratte 1995, op. cit. (n. 43) et Smith 1997, op. cit. (n. 45), signalons la lecture très personnelle de P. Veyne, *L'empire gréco-romain* (Paris 2005), «Pourquoi l'art gréco-romain a-t-il pris fin?», 749–865.

[48] Portrait de Vienne: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Antikensammlung, inv. no. 1.932 et portrait de Smyrne: Dépôt de l'Agora, Musée Archéologique.

[49] *Panégyrique* 2(10).9.5.

plus proche de la *laetitia* sévérienne: serait-on dans un contexte séculaire qui ne s'affirme pas en tant que tel, en ces années du renouvellement cyclique qui ne donnera pas lieu à célébration urbaine?[50]

Avec Constantin, nous nous situons à la même époque dans un registre très différent, qui reprend à son compte le modèle augustéen du *princeps* bien rasé, d'une majesté sans âge, jusqu'à ce fameux portrait de Bolsena, une tête de Constantin retravaillée à partir d'un portrait du premier *princeps*.[51] Après la mort de Maximien et lors de l'affrontement contre Maxence, cette identité augustéenne s'est affirmée par le portrait et des allusions littéraires ou épigraphiques au thème de la paix,[52] par une sérénité qui se combine avec les prétentions antérieures, des qualités militaires aux filiations multiples, de Constance le tétrarque à Claude, dans une refondation dynastique des aspirations du souverain. Il est loisible, sans forcer le trait, de rejouer l'affrontement Antoine/Octavien avec Licinius/Constantin, une fois Maxence éliminé à la bataille du pont Milvius: l'âge s'oppose à la jeunesse éternelle, la corpulence à la sveltesse, la rudesse à l'élégance, une réaffirmation de l'*imperator* à la figure du *ciuilis princeps*. Des formules introductives opposent, en Tarraconaise Licinius *deuictor omnium gentium barbararum et super omnes retro principes prouidentissimus*,[53] et en Afrique Constantin *conditor adque amplificator totius orbis Romani sui ac singularum quarumque ciuitatum statum adque ornatum liberalitate clementiae suae augens*.[54] La rhétorique ne connaît pas de limite dans cette inflation des commémorations d'une identité impériale combattante. Gageons toutefois que Maxence, à Rome même, dernier dépositaire d'une véritable politique urbaine, représente au mieux les ambiguïtés d'une *memoria* contestée, mais toutefois fidèle aux accents les plus traditionnels de l'identité augustéenne du principat:[55] si Constantin s'est approprié l'image du premier prince, peut-on de manière un peu provocante affirmer que le fils de Maximien en avait

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[50] Zosime (*Histoire nouvelle* 2.7.2) déplore la non-célébration des *ludi saeculares* en 314. À propos des jeux sévériens et de la perception du renouvellement des temps, Benoist 2005, op. cit. (n. 37), chap. VII, particuliérement 301–308.

[51] Musée de Villa Giulia, Rome (inv. no. 104973). A. Giuliano, 'Augustus-Constantinus', *Bollettino d'Arte* 76 [nos. 68–69] (1991), 3–10.

[52] Par exemple sur l'arc de Constantin: *fundatori quietis*; *CIL* 6.1139 (*ILS* 694–3).

[53] *CIL* 2.4105 = *RIT* 94, Tarragonne, lignes 1–4.

[54] *CIL* 8.1179, Utique, lignes 1–6.

[55] En partant de l'essai de M. Cullhed, Conservator Urbis Suae, *Studies in the Politics and Propaganda of the Emperor Maxentius* (Stockholm 1994) et des remarques d'O. Hekster, 'The City of Rome in Late Imperial Ideology: The Tetrarchs, Maxentius, and Constantine', *Mediterraneo Antico* 2.2 (1999), 717–748, part. 731–733, à propos de Mars.

assimilé l'essence? C'est ainsi que les monnayages de Maxence à la mémoire éternelle, associant trois générations, Maximien, Maxence et Romulus, fournissent une ultime leçon par la construction dans l'*Urbs* d'un discours cohérent en images (monnaies), en mots (titulatures) et en monuments (et cérémonies), ces parcelles identifiables dans l'espace urbain du souvenir à partager, même si le vainqueur d'octobre 312 s'est en définitive approprié nominalement ces traces d'un passé, désormais réactualisé.[56]

Paris, Juillet 2006

[56] *RIC* 6, 382 nos. 243–257, Rome *(Æternae Memoriae)*. S. Benoist, «Images des dieux, images des hommes. Réflexions sur le 'culte impérial' au troisième siècle», dans R.-H. Yvet (ed.), *La «crise» de l'empire romain de Marc Aurèle à Constantin* (Paris 2006), 27–64, pour quelques compléments.

MAPPING THE REPRESENTATION OF ROMAN IMPERIAL POWER IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Erika Manders*

On 31 December 192, the controversial last Antonine emperor, Commodus, was murdered after a reign of twelve years. His violent death inaugurated a period of instability concerning imperial succession which continued (with some short interruptions) until Diocletian's succession in 284. Apart from the difficulty of imperial succession, Roman emperors had to cope with other severe problems from 193 onwards, some already announcing themselves during Marcus Aurelius' reign. External powers, for example the Persians, and internal frictions threatened the unity of the Empire. In addition, economic problems aggravated the overall situation. From 284, however, Diocletian brought relief; together with his co-regents he gained military victories and brought military, administrative, and financial reforms into force.

It is evident that 'a strong man' was badly needed in the period 193–284. Even if rulers could not be one, they had to at least present themselves as such. In order to preserve the fragile unity within the Roman Empire, representation of imperial power was thus of vital importance. How, then, did the representation of Roman imperial power develop during the troublesome years 193–284 A.D.? Was it a random process by means of *ad hoc* decisions from the different emperors and influential people around them? Or can we distinguish *patterns* in the ways in which third century emperors were represented and/or presented themselves to their subjects?

In this article the previous questions will be addressed only indirectly.[1] Attention will primarily be paid to the methodology that underlies an analysis of the representation of imperial power in the period preceding

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[1] My dissertation on patterns and developments in the representation of Roman imperial power (A.D. 193–284) will focus on these questions.

the third century crisis and in the period of actual crisis.[2] Firstly, the term 'power', 'representation' and all concepts linked to these issues will be discussed. Emphasis will be on a clear definition of the concepts. Secondly, the media used for representation and the 'problems' inherent to communication (and to the media used for this purpose) will be dealt with. Finally, a case study will be presented: in which way does a medium employed for representation, in this case imperial coinage, provide an insight into the development of the representation of power in the third century A.D.?

Concepts and theories

> Power is, then, a far more complex and mysterious quality than any apparently simple manifestation of it would appear. It is as much a matter of impression, of theatre, of persuading those over whom authority is wielded to collude in their subjugation.[3]

It is not easy to grasp the exact meaning of a concept so comprehensive and, at the same time, so widely used as the term 'power'. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED in the following) defines power amongst other things as "the capacity to influence the behaviour of others, the emotions, or the course of events".[4] This broad definition does not put any limitations on the possession of power; power is not necessarily restricted to particular individuals or groups within society. Although it is obvious that different types of power are meant here, relations of power exist in the public sphere (for instance between a political leader and his or her subjects) as well as in the private realm (for instance between parents and their children).

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[2] There is much discussion on the appropriateness of the term 'crisis' applied to the third century troubles as well as on the reach of the problems present in this period. See for instance G. Alföldy, *Die Krise des Römischen Reiches. Geschichte, Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbetrachtung* (Stuttgart 1989); L. de Blois, 'The Crisis of the third century A.D. in the Roman Empire: A modern myth?', in L. de Blois and J. Rich (eds.), *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire*. Impact of Empire 2 (Amsterdam 2002); K.-P. Johne, T. Gerhardt und U. Hartmann (eds.) *Deleto paene imperio Romano. Transformationsprozesse des Römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert und ihre Rezeption in der Neuzeit* (Stuttgart 2006).

[3] J. Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph* (Oxford 1998), 53.

[4] C. Soanes and A. Stevenson, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (11th edition; Oxford 2004), 1125 s.v. 'power'.

The ways in which power can be attained vary. When we narrow the concept 'power' further and apply it to the authority which the Roman emperors wielded over their subjects in the third century A.D., the means that the future emperors employed to obtain the purple illustrate the various ways in which power could be acquired; some imperial candidates appealed, rightfully or not, to their ancestry and claimed in this way the supreme rule, whereas the majority of third century rulers used their legions to acquire the imperial throne.

Furthermore, wielding power is inextricably bound up with the representation of power. Elsner's observation that power is "a matter of . . . persuading those over whom authority is wielded to collude in their subjugation", illustrates this perfectly. Before elaborating on the link between wielding power and its representation, however, the concept 'representation' will be defined first.[5] 'Representation' is, in my view, a symbolic rendering in text or image that can provide an insight into social relations and the ideals, standards and values involved.[6] When we apply this definition to the Roman emperor, the representation of imperial power is thus a means for spreading imperial ideology.[7] To avoid misunderstanding, ideology must not be conceived as static: "Ideology is never a coherent whole, never totalised; it constantly adjusts and readjusts, being part of a living society".[8] Thompson's definition in *Ideology and Modern Culture* underlines the dynamic character of ideology; he describes ideology as "the ways in which the meaning constructed

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[5] Next to the meaning ascribed to 'representation' used here, 'representation' can also imply people who act, symbolic or concrete, on behalf of other persons or organs. In this article, however, only the form of representation consisting of a symbolic rendering in text or image will be dealt with.

[6] This definition of 'representation' is based on a definition provided by a recent German publication: "Repräsentation ist die symbolische, in Text und/oder Bild übersetzte Wiedergabe der Position, die eine Person oder Gruppe innerhalb der sozialen Schichtung der Gesellschaft einnimmt, wobei ebenfalls die mit dieser Stellung verbundenen und konnotierten Ideale, Werte und Normen mehr oder weniger umfangreich und explizit artikuliert werden" in G. Weber und M. Zimmermann, 'Propaganda, Selbstdarstellung und Repräsentation. Die Leitbegriffe des Kolloquiums in der Forschung zur frühen Kaiserzeit, in G. Weber und M. Zimmermann (eds.), *Propaganda – Selbstdarstellung – Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreich des 1. Jhs. n. Chr.* (Stuttgart 2003), 36.

[7] Concerning the relation between representation and ideology in modern times, Sturken and Cartwright observe the following: "People use systems of representation to experience, interpret, and make sense of the conditions of their lives both as image-makers and as viewers. In essence, we construct ideological selves through a network of representations – many of them visual". See further M. Sturken and L. Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: an Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford 2001), 56.

[8] O. Hekster, *Commodus. An Emperor at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam 2002), 10.

and conveyed by symbolic forms serves, in particular circumstances, to establish and sustain structured social relations from which some individuals and groups benefit more than others, and which some individuals and groups have an interest in preserving while others may seek to contest".[9]

Imperial ideology, and therefore its representation, was established by a dialogue between the Roman emperor (together with his entourage) and his subjects: "…es wäre fatal, alles einer zentral gelenkten Maschinerie unterzuordnen."[10] Without a dialogue between the highest levels of imperial administration and the lower levels in Roman society, alienation must have been unavoidable. How, then, could imperial ideology serve as a binding agent within the Roman Empire when there would have been an unbridgeable gap between the central authority and the inhabitants of the Roman Empire?[11] Furthermore, for the emperor it was dangerous not to anticipate what different sections of the Roman population expected from him; there are examples available of Roman emperors who did not (or not enough) care about their subjects' expectations and died a violent death.[12] The argument, however, must not be pushed too far; in the end, emperors, or at least the 'imperial centre', were decisive on their own 'visual programme'.[13] Moreover, active participation of a large part of the Roman population in establishing imperial ideology was nearly impossible if only because of practical reasons.

Ideology can thus be spread by means of representation. Is it, however, also right to use the term 'propaganda' instead of 'representation' with respect to the spreading of imperial messages in the Roman Empire? This problem has been addressed by many modern scholars.[14]

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[9] J.B. Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture. Critical Theory in the Era of Mass Communication* (Stanford 1990), 294.

[10] Weber and Zimmermann 2003, op. cit. (n. 6), 24.

[11] C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley 2000).

[12] The Syrian emperor Heliogabalus (218–222 A.D.) is an example of this.

[13] The most telling example of the emperor's influence on his imagery is the difference between the first and the second series of coins minted for Hadrian. The first series of coins were minted during the emperor's absence from Rome. On the second series of coins, minted in a period during which the emperor was present in Rome, a change in titulature is apparent in comparison with the first series of coins. This makes clear that the authority of the emperor in this field should not be underestimated.

[14] For an overview of various opinions on this topic, see Weber and Zimmermann 2003, op. cit. (n. 6) (see especially O. Hekster, 'Imperial Spin: Propaganda – Selbst-

As I have already shown, it is important to use clear definitions for concepts linked to communication. If clearly defined, it can be useful to apply modern concepts to the ancient world and, in this, also to compare different periods of history. Avoiding modern concepts could "all too easily lead to a confusing array of equally circumspect semi-synonyms".[15] However, it is often necessary to dispose these concepts of their modern connotations and, consequently, define them broadly. Especially the term 'propaganda' is, to the modern mind, closely associated with totalitarian regimes who held sway during specific periods in the previous century.[16] To make this concept work in ancient terms, it is necessary to strip 'propaganda' from its modern negative connotations. This can be achieved by applying the following common definition of 'propaganda': "The systematic propagation of information or ideas by an interested party, esp. in a tendentious way in order to encourage or instil a particular attitude or response".[17] Holding on to this definition, the concept propaganda is more powerful than the term representation but therefore not less useful. While using the definition of propaganda provided by the OED, it is still possible to acknowledge the dialogue taking place between emperor and people with regard to imperial ideology. Therefore, in my opinion, it is certainly valid to use the term propaganda in connection with the 'machine' spreading imperial ideology in the Roman Empire.

Then, returning to the connection between the representation of power and wielding it, the representation of imperial power is necessary to legitimize the authority of the emperor which is, in turn, vital for his keeping of supreme rule. This is, in short, my view of power as "a matter of (…) persuading those over whom authority is wielded to collude in their subjugation". Next to legitimization, representation of power can also (and of course simultaneously) be employed for education and glorification. The last objective is the most conspicuous and therefore the most treacherous one; it can provide the concept

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darstellung – Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreich des 1 Jhs. n. Chr.', *The Classical Review* 55.1 (2005), 245–246).

[15] Hekster 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 9.

[16] Illustrative for this point is the definition of 'propaganda' provided by Sturken and Cartwright: 'the crude process of using false representations to lure people into holding beliefs that may compromise their own interests'; Sturken and Cartwright 2001, op. cit. (n. 7), 21.

[17] J. Simpson and E. Weiner (eds.), *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford 1989²), part XII, 632 s.v. *propaganda*.

'representation of power' with a negative connotation and, additionally, obscure the pluriform character of it.

To sum up, representation of power is essential for having power. Additionally, representation of imperial power is a means for spreading imperial ideology. The latter is susceptible to external influences because of its dynamic character. As a result of this, representation of imperial power is affected by means of a dialogue between emperor and people.[18] Finally, the aims of representation of power can be summarized in three concepts: education, glorification and legitimization. The aim last mentioned displays the relation between representation of power and having power the most clearly and therefore closes the circle.

Communicating imperial ideology: media and perception

Any form of representation makes use of media. Which were these media and what was the scope of these different media within the Roman Empire?

Various media could contain (symbolic) references to imperial power and/or present a particular picture of the emperor, for instance imperial and provincial coinage, reliefs and imperial portraits, literary and administrative texts, texts of law, petitions, votive inscriptions, games, and imperial appearances. Together they convey a visual programme presenting imperial ideology.[19]

Ancient media used for dissemination of messages have to be put in the proper context. Important in this matter is questioning the scope of the particular media. Who saw the votive inscription dedicated to Jupiter? Who came in touch with imperial coins? It is evident that a votive inscription, put up in a distant corner on the Forum in a provincial city, was known to fewer people than a silver coin propagating Septimius Severus' victory over Clodius Albinus that was disseminated to the farthest corners of the Empire and was used as means of payment. Some media are thus more locally bound than others. Furthermore, illiteracy

[18] "An advantage of the term 'representation' is that it can refer not only to the visual or literary portraits of the king [Louis XIV], the image projected by the media, but also to the image received,…", see P. Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven en Londen 1992), 10.

[19] On 'visual programme' and image as 'semantisches System' see T. Hölscher, *Römische Bildsprache als semantisches System* (Heidelberg 1987).

could also play a part while analyzing the scope of particular media. Which part of the Roman society was actually able to read Virgil's *Aeneis* or a text of law?[20] The oral tradition, still present in Roman society, informed illiterates about important decisions and gave them, to a certain extent, access to literary texts. Moreover, images provided information about significant events. Yet, illiteracy limited the scope of particular media. Additionally, in the case of coinage, the material of which the coins were made and that decided its value could put some restrictions to the scope of this medium as well; it is hardly imagineable that the poor had access to coins of a high denomination.

Another practical aspect of representation that can be linked to the scope of the messages spread by the different media is the 'practice of looking', in other words the problem of interpretation.[21] Different people look at imagery in different ways. There is, however, not only a difference between the interpretations of the imperial visual programme by the inhabitants of the Roman Empire, but also between the interpretations of the ancient viewer and the modern interpreter. A modern scholar analyzing imperial representation is thus faced with two problems; it is hard to take both the various ways in which the imperial imagery could be interpreted by contemporaries and the difference between ancient and modern practices of looking into consideration. Although it is impossible to equalize ancient and modern ways of looking, this problem can be dealt with by putting the message in its ancient context. This implies, for example, that the author of a text or the manufacturer of a portrait has to be examined, insofar possible. The other problem of interpretation, the different practices of looking by contemporaries, is more difficult to 'solve'; using media that limit the ways of looking as a starting point probably helps while dealing with this problem. Coinage, then, is the best example since text and images on coins work together.[22] This cooperation between

[20] A.K. Bowman and G. Woolf (eds.), *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World* (Cambridge 1994).

[21] Concerning the practice of looking, see especially Sturken and Cartwright 2001, op. cit. (n. 7).

[22] Modern scholars hold various opinions concerning the extent to which coin types were actually seen and understood. Howgego states that "at a minimum, it cannot be wrong to assert that coinage was one of the means by which imperial imagery penetrated into private contexts": C. Howgego, *Ancient History from Coins* (London and New York 1995), 74. Symbols wich were particular to coinage were found in numerous

text and image restricts the possibilities of interpretation and provides therefore more clarity about how the majority of the Romans would have interpreted the messages.

Interpretation of imperial imagery is by necessity linked to the perception of imperial messages. Perception, in its turn, is inextricably connected with communicating imperial ideology; ideological messages are intended to reach audiences and they thus provoke interpretation.[23] In a few cases the targeting of specific audiences while communicating imperial ideology might have occurred in the Roman Empire.[24]

Representation of imperial power in the third century A.D. on coinage

When analyzing the representation of imperial power in general and the development of imperial representation in the third century in particular, it is useful to take imperial coinage as a starting point.[25] The reason for this is not merely that the interpretation of messages spread by this medium could be simplified by the presence of both text and images, as stated above. Additionally, a coin, ancient or modern, "will be an object existing in multiple copies that will be distributed to a large number of people who may be scattered over a wide geographical area".[26] Equally important is that Roman imperial coins were minted uninterruptedly from the beginning until the end of the Empire, even in periods of crisis. Therefore, they present a coherent picture that can be used to obtain information about economic procedures as well as historical events and processes. Among those processes, the development of imperial representation occupies a prominent position.

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parts of the private sphere. In my opinion, this makes clear that coins were certainly seen and possibly also understood.

[23] Hekster 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 8.

[24] See further F. Kemmers, 'Not at random: Evidence for a regionalised coin supply?', in J. Bruhn, B. Croxford and D. Grigoropoulos (eds.), *TRAC 2004: Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference* (Durham 2005), 39–49; F. Kemmers, *Coins for a Legion. An analysis of the Coin Finds of the Augustan Legionary Fortress and Flavian* Canabae Legionis *at Nijmegen* (PhD Nijmegen 2005); O. Hekster 'Coins and messages. Audience targeting on coins of different denominations?' in L. de Blois et al. (eds.), *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power.* Impact of Empire 3 (Amsterdam 2003), 20–35.

[25] In contrast to imperial coinage, provincial coinage is more useful for analyzing the extent to which imperial messages permeated the Empire.

[26] C. King, 'Roman portraiture: Images of power?', in G.M. Paul and M. Ierardi, *Roman Coins and Public Life under the Empire* (Ann Arbor 2002), 123–136; 124.

But what kind of messages did imperial coins disseminate? What was put on the obverses and reverses? The obverses of imperial coins usually show portraits of members of the imperial family, most frequently the emperor. The reverses could also contain an imperial portrait. These imperial portraits, on most obverses and some reverses, show the emperor in a particular role:

> In order to fulfill public expectation, the Roman emperor had to perform a number of roles, either passively or actively and often simultaneously. He was a citizen, a general, a consul at various stages in his life, a husband and father, a son, a founder or consolidator of a dynasty, a companion of the gods, specially favored by them and even virtually assimilated to them on occasion. All of these concepts found visual expression in coin portraits in the late republic and the empire, (…).[27]

On the obverse, next to the imperial portrait the emperor's titulature is put forward. On the reverses, the legend and design present an image of the emperor and/or of his reign in a broader sense. Wishes or promises concerning the future, a special connection between the emperor and one or more deities, important deeds of the emperor, significant events; all kinds of messages were put on the coins' reverses. These messages are linked to the emperor and his reign by means of its content and/or the fact that the portrait of the emperor on the obverse and the message on the reverse belong to the same coin. In contrast with the reverses, the obverses were more static and less susceptible to major changes during the course of the Empire. The reverses changed more easily; almost during every reign new types were introduced.

Thus, imperial coinage proves to be valuable for interpreting the image of imperial power during the course of the third century that circulated through large parts of the Roman empire. It can be seen as a message medium, as a "vehicle for imperial communications".[28] Nowadays, starting from this presupposition has been generally accepted, although opinions vary widely concerning the extent to which coins were used for disseminating ideological messages. Could imperial coins be interpreted as the outcome of a well-oiled propaganda machine or were those coins just spreading trivial messages? The assumption that decisions about the imagery and legends on imperial coins originated at

[27] King 2002, op. cit. (n. 26), 127.

[28] C. Noreña, 'The communication of the emperor's virtues', *Journal of Roman Studies* 91 (2001), 146–168, at 147.

the top underlies both points of view.[29] Whether the emperor himself or officials such as the *tresviri monetales*, the secretary *a rationibus* or the *procurator monetae* had been responsible for minting,[30] "each coin minted at Rome was an official document and as such represented an official expression of the emperor and his regime".[31] Moreover, whether the coins were spreading "messages *from*" or "tributes *to*" the emperor,[32] "they must display the emperor as he wished to be perceived".[33] However, one has to keep in mind that, as discussed above, messages spread by means of coins almost inevitably anticipated wishes/expectations of particular groups in Roman society.

Concerning third century imperial coinage, part IV and V of the *Roman Imperial Coinage* (*RIC* in the following) provide the best overview. Although the catalogue, based on coin hoards, is old and therefore not wholly up to date, it outlines the coin types minted during the third century. Unfortunately, no other catalogue, representative with regard to coins minted in the imperial mints during the third century, exists.

In which way can the coin types listed in the *RIC* be deployed to map imperial representation in the turbulent third century? In my research on the representation of imperial power during the period 193–284, I analyzed the coin types mentioned in the *RIC* and divided them in so-called 'representation categories'. Examining the types of all *Augusti* in the period 193–284, I chose to analyse only the reverses and not the obverses because of the reason mentioned above; the reverses are less static and more susceptible to changes than the obverses. Therefore, they provide more distinct images of particular emperors and their reigns which facilitates an analysis of the development of imperial representation in the third century. In addition, for reasons of space, coin types of usurpers and of members of the imperial family other than the emperor, types showing another portait next to the imperial portrait on the obverse, consecration issues, and types listed in the *RIC* as hybrid, irregular, barbarous or false are left out of consideration.

The third century types provide thirteen representation categories. In the appendix an overview of the different categories is given. Naturally,

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[29] O. Hekster, 'The Roman army and propaganda', in P. Erdkamp (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Roman army*, (forthcoming).

[30] A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Image and authority in the coinage of Augustus', *Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1986), 66–87; 67.

[31] Noreña 2001, op. cit. (n. 28), 147.

[32] Wallace-Hadrill 1986, op. cit. (n. 30), 68.

[33] Hekster 2002, op. cit. (n. 8), 89.

some coin types can be placed into more than one category (for instance types that show the emperor in military dress making a sacrifice). I have tried to avoid overlap as much as possible, since otherwise the division of types into representation categories is of less value. However, the elaboration on the categories that can be found in my forthcoming PhD dissertation aims to present a balanced picture.

After dividing the coin types into these categories, it is possible to distinguish the forms of imperial representation that were the most widespread and that were rare in the third century. Most coin types belong to the categories 'military representation', 'divine association', '*saeculum aureum*', and 'virtues' (see figure 1). Of all coin types, 22.5% have a military character, on 21.8% of them the emperor and his reign are associated with the divine, 19.2% promote *saeculum aureum* and 17.4% glorify virtues. 21.2% of all coin types are spread over the remaining categories.[34] Thus, in the turbulent third century emphasis was laid on military matters, which is not strange for a period afflicted by many military problems. In addition, the frequent appearance both of associations of emperors and their rules with the divine (in other words mainly with deities who could provide help in straitened circumstances) and of promises/promotions of a golden age on third century coinage is not astonishing in a troublesome period. The emphasis on the virtues of the third century emperors shows that the rulers apparently had an interest in presenting themselves as the right man in the right place during a period in which the emperorship shook perceivably. Of course, this does not imply that all exponents of these forms of representation should be reduced to actual third century problems and that in other periods these forms were not as common as in the third century.[35]

Analyzing the coin types may result in the categories described above, yet a problem inherent in this way of examinating coinage has to be addressed. The above examination is based on coin *types* and not on actual numbers of coins. How reliable is an analysis based on types?

First, the repeated introduction of new coin types during the course of the Roman Empire, as stated above, shows the importance of types and, therefore, the relevance of an analysis of imperial representation

[34] The total percentage is more than 100% (i.e. 102.1%) because some coin types belong to more than one category.

[35] On imperial virtues communicated by means of coins in the period 69–235 A.D., see Noreña 2001, op. cit. (n. 28).

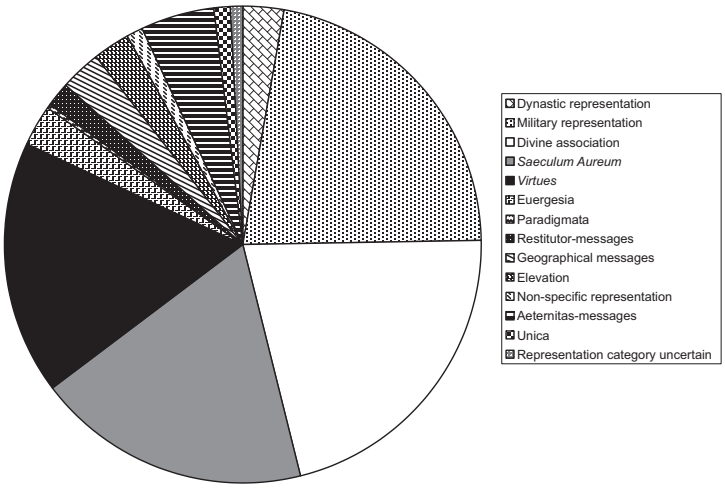

Fig. 1: Representation of imperial power on Roman imperial coinage, A.D. 193–284.

based on coin types. Secondly, a correlation between coin types and actual coin numbers can be demonstrated. This correlation can be revealed by means of testing particular representation themes against actual numbers of coins. To analyze this, I took the category 'divine association' as example. The number of coin types promoting divine association issued during a particular reign was then compared with the actual numbers of coins of a particular emperor propagating divine association within representative hoards.[36] 'Representative hoards' in this case mean hoards that were found in different parts of the Empire and that contain large numbers of coins issued during the third century. Furthermore, because of third century hoards consisting of gold and bronze coins are scarce, I only used silver hoards. The majority of these silver hoards contain only *antoniniani* (Normanby, Neftenbach, Venera, Çanakkale), one hoard contains both *denarii* and *antoniniani* (Cunetio) and another consists only of *denarii* (Reka-Devnia). The results of this comparison are shown in two graphs. The first one shows the percentages of *denarii* (attributed to particular emperors) promoting divine association within the Reka-Devnia and Cunetio hoards, set against the

[36] The percentages are respectively on the total number of coin types issued during a particular reign as they are listed in the *RIC* and on the total number of coins of a specific emperor found in a particular hoard.

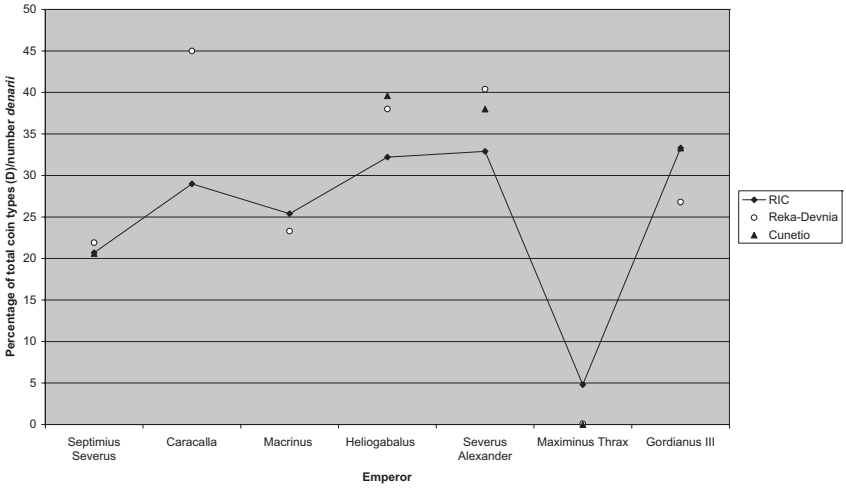

Fig. 2: Development 'divine association' on *denarii*.

percentages of coin types (issued during specific rules), listed in the *RIC* only or amongst other things as *denarii*, showing divine messages.[37]

In figure 3, the percentages of *antoniniani* (issued during other rules than the ones in figure 1) promoting divine association within the Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach, and Çanakkale hoards are opposed to the percentages of coin types (issued during particular reigns), listed in the *RIC* only or amongst other things as *antoniniani*, propagating divine association.[38]

In interpreting these two graphs, it is obviously clear that, for most reigns, the percentages of *RIC* and the hoards do not wholly correspond with each other. When looking at the overall development of divine association, however, one sees similar fluctuations in the percentages of coin types listed in the *RIC* and in the number of coins stemming from the hoards. In my opinion, this conformity proves that coin types can

[37] Geta, Gordian I and II, Pupienus, and Balbinus are excluded here. The percentages are respectively on the total number of *denarii* of a specific emperor found in a particular hoard and on the total number of coin types, as they are listed in the *RIC*, issued during a particular reign and issued only or amongst other things as *denarii*.

[38] Philip II, Herennius Etruscus, Hostilian, and Saloninus are excluded here. The percentages are respectively on the total number of *antoniniani* of a specific emperor found in a particular hoard and on the total number of coin types, as they are listed in the *RIC*, issued during a particular reign and issued only or amongst other things as *antoniniani*.

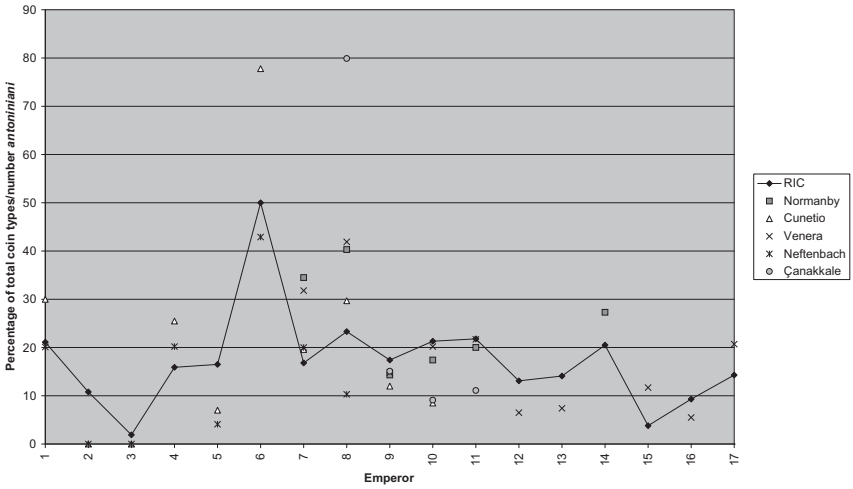

Fig. 3: Development 'divine association' on *antoniniani*.

be used in a research on the representation of imperial power in the third century. Thus, an analysis of the number of coin types indicates properly on which kind of messages emphasis was put and which messages were certainly not widely propagated during particular periods in Roman history.

For now, only the development of the representation of imperial power by means of imperial coinage has been discussed. In the end, combining separate approaches to specific media and separate models for analyzing different kinds of messages will ensure a complete and subtle picture of the development of the representation of (imperial) power, not only for the third century but for any historic period.

Nijmegen, October 2006

Appendix 1

Dynastic representation	All forms of representation concerning the family of the emperor, his descent (of humans, *dei* and *divi*) and (intended) successors.
Military representation	All forms of representation concerning the (harmony in the) army, victories, subdued areas, the role of the emperor as general, and military titulature.
Divine association	All forms of representation concerning the connection of the emperor and his reign with the gods/the divine, and the role of the emperor as *pontifex maximus*.
Saeculum Aureum	All forms of representation concerning the prosperity which the emperor will bring/has brought.
Euergesia	All forms of representation concerning social-economical achievements, accomplished by the emperor.
Paradigmata	All forms of representation concerning attempts of the emperor to associate himself with the great emperors of the olden times (Augustus, Trajanus, Marcus Aurelius).
Restitutor-messages	All forms of representation concerning the role of the emperor as *restitutor* (not only with regard to military matters but also with regard to religious and economical matters).
Elevation	All forms of representation concerning the placing of the emperor or members of the imperial family beyond the human ranks.
Non-specific representation	All forms of representation in which the emperor (or someone else) assumes a 'neutral role' and fulfil no specific function.
Virtues	All forms of representation concerning the virtues of the emperor, the army, or the people (of Rome or of other regions).

Table (*cont.*)

Aeternitas-messages	All forms of representation concerning eternal continuation of the reign of the emperor at that time, the existence of Rome, peace, hope, happiness, security, the invincibility of the emperor and the Roman Empire, deities, and of the concord within the imperial family.
Geographical messages	All forms of representation concerning (personifications of) geographic entities such as the city of Rome and provinces.
Unica	All forms of representation that do not fit in the above categories.

THE EMPEROR'S FAMILY ON COINS (THIRD CENTURY): IDEOLOGY OF STABILITY IN TIMES OF UNREST

Marietta Horster*

In many of his multifaceted studies Lukas de Blois has discussed different aspects of the conception of third-century emperorship and of the views on virtues and qualities of emperors.[1] These subjects will continue to be points of debate given the hiatuses and discrepancies in the surviving evidence. The last years of discussion made it obvious that not only careful analysis and the consideration of long-term-developments, but also the acceptance of the imperative to sustain antagonisms in ancient authors and to point out the differences of and in sources – authors, inscriptions, coins, monuments etc. – may as well add insights into the concepts of emperor and emperorship in the third century. This paper aims to add one more facet to the complicated issue of third-century conceptions of power and authority.

To whom it may concern…

A starting point for the discussion of the dynastic impact of members of the Roman imperial family was made by Hildegard Temporini's dissertation *Die Frauen am Hofe Trajans* in 1978.[2] In her investigation of the impact of imperial women on the imagery and propagation of Trajan's rule, she demonstrated that Trajan's Roman coinage had a new focus on family members and was meant to be a demonstration

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[1] L. de Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* (Leiden 1976), 120–174; *Idem*, 'Traditional Virtues and New Spiritual Qualities in Third Century Views of Empire, Emperorship and Practical Politics', *Mnemosyne* 47 (1994), 166–176; *Idem*, 'Emperor and Empire in the Works of Greek-speaking Authors of the Third Century A.D.', in *ANRW* 2.34.4, 3391–3443.

[2] H. Temporini, *Die Frauen am Hofe Trajans. Ein Beitrag zur Stellung der Augustae im Principat* (Berlin and New York 1978).

of the monarchical character of the regime, a regime and dynasty which was going to last beyond the emperor's death and thus would secure internal peace and external power to the Roman people. But, admittedly, in view of the small scale of such family-members-coinage, less than 2% of the gold coins and only about 0.2% of the silver coinage of Trajan's Roman mint,[3] the question lays at hand if such a small output could have any influence on the image of the dynasty and could fashion opinion at all.

Emperors before Trajan, starting with Claudius and Nero, had made even less use of this kind of propagation of women and children, although Vespasian at least had quite a lot of different types with names and images of his two sons on obverses and reverses. Under Titus and Domitian some coins emphasising Iulia Titi and Domitia Longina were issued, whereas the emperors following Trajan had a slightly growing output of coins with obverses explicitly connected to the dynasty by image and legend; many new types of reverses were added in combination with such 'dynastic' obverses. These reverses are supposed to be a crucial factor for the interpretation of such dynastic-coins and therewith, for the relevance and impact of dynastic issues in a specific reign, and for the insight of an individual's concept of emperorship.

The number of such different reverse legends as CONCORDIA, IVNO or PROVIDENTIA AVG. on coins of empresses and Caesars had peaks: Marcus Aurelius coined 22 different reverse types for his wife Faustina the Younger in fifteen years, and Septimius Severus 25 for Julia Domna and 27 for Geta Caesar during a period of eighteen years, 33 for Cornelia Salonina, wife of Gallienus, in fifteen years of reign, and Tetricius Caesar received 24 reverse legends in about one year – the numbers are based on the respective volumes of the *Roman Imperial Coinage* (*RIC*) and *British Museum Coins of the Roman Empire* (*BMCRE*) publications not counting all the slight variants of such coin legends and the matching images.[4] Innovations of legends and images on the one hand and repetitiveness on the other hand are a common

[3] R.P. Duncan-Jones, 'Implications of Roman Coinage: debates and differences', *Klio* 87 (2005), 459–487, 460 n. 8.

[4] In the footnotes the following abbreviations are used: *RIC* = H. Mattingly et al., *Roman Imperial Coinage* (London, 1923–); *BMCRE* = H. Mattingly et al., *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum* (London and Oxford, 1966–1976); Cohen = H. Cohen, *Description historique des monnaies frappes sous l'empire romain communément appelées médailles impériales*, (Paris 1880–1892); Kent/Hirmer = J.P.C. Kent, *Roman Coins*, (London 1978); obv. = obverse; rev. = reverse.

feature not only on the small numbers of coins minted in the names of members of the imperial family but also of the emperors' coins. Thus, the emphasis on tradition and the remembrance of traditional values and images as well as the accentuation on the diffusion and dissemination of a new focus on certain values and politics seem to have been an integral part of post-Augustan coinage. However, the answer to the questions if imperial coinage was an "important communication medium"[5] expressing the policy of an emperor and influencing public opinion or if these messages were lost on most of the coin users, because messages on coins were highly conventional, is still open to debate.[6] Even if there were no consistent and standardised ways of using the medium of coinage during imperial times, this does not imply, as Olivier Hekster has pointed out, that individual emperors did not try audience targeting and did not attain to reach such an audience.[7] Most of our modern criteria and evaluations like "liveliness on coins reflects political instability"[8] (why?) are modern constructs and, moreover, are based on the assumption that we are able to know what and how the ancient viewer, the user of the coins, 'saw' and 'understood'.

My conclusions give credit to different opinions as it will be demonstrated, that although the use of specific images as well as words may have been conventional in the course of the first two centuries, in the late second and in the third century, they were sometimes used in such an unconventional way, that either messages or intentions of the earlier traditions were misunderstood or that an emperor did not always control all his mints in like manner.

However, starting from the beginning of the Principate up to the third century, new images, new legends and new combinations of obverses

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[5] Duncan-Jones 2005, op. cit. (n. 3), 459.

[6] For main arguments and an overview of the discussion and its protagonists, see B. Levick, 'Messages on the Roman Coinage: Types and Inscriptions', in G. Paul and M. Ierardi (eds.), *Roman Coins and Public Life under the Empire* (Ann Arbor 1999), 41–60 and O. Hekster, 'Coins and Messages: Audience Targeting on Coins of Different Denominations', in L. de Blois et al. (eds.), *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power.* Impact of Empire 3 (Amsterdam 2003), 20–35.

[7] See Hekster 2003, op. cit. (n. 6), 23–24, for his comments on the analysis of coinage types used to propagate *liberalitas*, *annona* or Ceres as specific subjects with relevance for the lower strata of Italian and urban society.

[8] A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Image and Authority in the Coinage of Augustus', *Journal of Roman Studies* 67 (1986), 66–87, at 70, cited by Hekster 2003, op. cit. (n. 6), 26 with approval for his own position that periods of great turmoil like the Civil War of A.D. 68/69 are a 'test case', because 'messages become more forceful' under such circumstances.

with reverses as well as of legends and images on coins emerged, which can only be explained by a deliberate and careful choice of the emperor or his entourage (including the responsible mint-masters). Especially the sometimes high level of background interference of coin-iconography as well of coin-legends makes it likely that, even if the first ideas and initiatives were made by the emperor, the specific choices and combinations might often have been made by the mint-masters, the experts.[9] Such a choice for a new imagery, new legends and combinations was obviously meant to propagate a specific image of a ruler. Even if there should be caution and doubt if and to what extent we are able to detect the (desired or non-intentioned) effects on the audience of these imperial coins,[10] we are at least able to get an insight into the emperor's or his

[9] With further references to the discussion on responsibilities of choices, see J.F. Drinkwater, *The Gallic Empire. Separatism and Continuity in the North-western Provinces of the Roman Empire A.D. 260–274* (Stuttgart 1987), 159–161.

[10] W.E. Metcalf, 'Whose liberalitas? Propaganda and Audience in the Early Roman Empire', *Rivista italiana di numismatica* 95 (1993), 337–346 and Hekster 2003, op. cit. (n. 6), emphasise that at least in some reigns with few (of a much larger range of) subjects, it seems likely that there was a propaganda-focus on the *plebs urbana* with the images and legends on *aes*/bronze issues (*congiaria* and *liberalitates* with distribution scenes on *sestertii* from Nero to Trajan) and a focus on the higher strata of society with silver and gold issues (e.g. the praise of the Praetorians on Claudian coinage, cf. Hekster, 27–28). However, from Hadrian to Trebonius Gallus distribution scenes as well as personifications of *liberalitas* are to be found on both precious metal and *aes* coinage. The identification of the targeted audience of the distribution scene coins as the urban plebs based on the assumption by Metcalf, 344 (cf. Hekster, 23 who admits that such boundaries between audiences "must have been somewhat blurred"), that *aes* coinage had a "primarily Italian and indeed urban circulation" leaves out the western provinces, in which from the second half of the first century to the late second century there were no such active mints like the many early civic mints especially in Spain, the early imperial mints in Lugdunum or Nemausus or the later third-century mints like Sirmium or Cyzicus. Hence, the imperial *aes* coinage circulated all over the western provinces, as the coin hoards demonstrate as well. Even if one admits that it is likely that a Roman senator or knight and other rich people might more often had *denarii* and *aurei* in their hands than *aes* coins, because they had slaves, freedmen, and freeborn personal who did all the shopping and paid all the small-change-bills, it is still likely that only the very poor would not often come across silver coins and might never see a gold coin during their lifetime. In any case, even if in some cases a targeted audience might be detected, how should we imagine the way of reception of these messages? For a discussion of such methods and for examples of appliance, see J.R. Clarke's stimulating work on the functioning of visual representation within a multilayered system of communication: J.R. Clarke, *Art in the Life of Ordinary Romans. Visual Representation and Non-elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.–A.D. 315* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2003), and with a specific focus on coins: P. Lummel, *"Zielgruppen" römischer Staatskunst: die Münzen der Kaiser Augustus bis Trajan und die trajanischen Staatsreliefs* (München 1991). Lummel, 8, differentiates between the following groups as audience (*Zielgruppen*) of coin messages: senate, soldiers, *plebs urbana*, Italians and the provincials.

entourage's (and mint-masters') preferences and choices in the context of innovations for images and legends on imperial coinage.

The evidence for my subject is the Roman Imperial Coinage, that is to say coins issued by the mints of Rome and of other few western and eastern mints under Roman central authorities, which used Latin legends on obverses and reverses on coins of the Roman denominational system similar to the coins issued by the mint of the City of Rome.[11]

My main arguments are based on the usage of types and legends by different emperors and their mints. This kind of argumentation does not reflect quantity of coins issued and may, therefore, be misleading.[12] Quantification is necessary if one wants to investigate into the chances that a specific coin might have reached a wider public and thereby might have formed the public image (if possible at all by these forms of communication) of an emperor. In so far, my own investigation might be a kind of methodological fall back without taking into account the quantities of issued coins and without trying systematically to quantify coin circulation, if this is ever possible. But one has to say, there are general problems of quantifications which are not to be overcome with

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According to Lummel's quite mechanic and methodologically questionable classification the provincials are addressed e.g. on Trajan's coins with ARABIA and DACIA CAPTA, the soldiers with *adlocutio* scenes or with FIDES EXERCITVM, the plebs with the CON(giaria) and circus coins, the senate at the beginning of Trajan's reign with SPQR legends, or with Trajan as *togatus* etc. (Trajanic coins, *ibidem*, 79–101). In contrast, R. Wolters, *Nummi signati. Untersuchungen zur römischen Münzprägung und Geldwirtschaft* (München 1999), 255–339, and others have pointed out that most of the coin-images and coin-legends of the Roman Imperial Coinage were meant to a public in the city of Rome and not to 'the Provincials', the 'Army' et cetera.

[11] The different third-century western and eastern imperial mints and their characteristics are discussed in all the introductions to individual reigns in the respective volumes of *RIC* and *BMCRE*. For an excellent up-to-date discussion of Aurelianus' ten imperial mints (Antiochia, Cyzicus, Lugdunum, Mediolanum, Rom, Serdica, Siscia, Ticinum, Trier, Tripolis) and the accompanying mint, the so called *moneta comitatensis*, see R. Göbl, *Die Münzprägung des Kaisers Aurelianus, 270/275* (Wien 1993), 31–68. Excluded in this paper are the so-called provincial coinage and the coins of the Greek cities as they both were not under the direct regulation of the Roman central administration and authority, the Greek cities' mints issued other denominations than the Roman imperial ones, and they never used legends (not even in the Greek language) on the reverses the way the Imperial mints did.

[12] For example from the Flavians to the Severans, the AEQUITAS legend dominates all of the *virtus* coinage by mere quantity of issued coins, *aurei*, *denarii* etc., as C.F. Noreña, 'The Communication of the Emperor's Virtues', *Journal of Roman Studies* 91 (2001), 146–168, has demonstrated in an examination of 105 hoard finds with the total of nearly 150.000 *denarii*. If one only relies e.g. on the respective volumes of the *RIC* the varieties of types would give quite another impression that is a reverse-themes-domination by Victory and only to a lesser extent by different emperor's virtues.

statistics of hoard finds, as the hoards bear in themselves methodological problems regarding their composition and their dissemination in time and space.[13]

Regional patterns of fineness in silver or gold, in weight and design of coins issued by different imperial mints emerge in the third century when the supply was dispersed to several regional mints in Rome, Italy and some western and eastern provinces. Not only portrait types sometimes varied between different imperial mints but also the reverse legends could differ considerably. However, to my mind, the subject of my paper does allow to rely on the mere evidence of the different types issued, as I am not asking if the general public, the user of the money, the man on the street might have had the chance to receive and look closely at a specific coin, or if everyone understood the specific messages or the symbolic system of coin types of one emperor. Parallel usage of the coins of different emperors, parallel use of coins of one emperor emitted over a long period of time, and the sometimes quite bad state of preservation of coins makes it quite likely that the 'propagation'-effect of single coins or series of coins should not be estimated very high.

The emperors and their family on imperial coins

The focus of this investigation is on the emperors' and mint-masters' choices of obverse and reverse types concerning the imperial family, the traditions and innovations of such types in the third century from mainly 235 to 284 and the alleged intentions which lay behind such choices as far as they can be conjectured.

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[13] On problems of quantifications as such, see C. Howgego, 'The Supply and Use of Money in the Roman World 200 B.C. to A.D. 300', *Journal of Roman Studies* 82 (1992), 1–31; *Idem*, 'Coin Circulation and the Integration of the Roman Economy', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 7 (1994), 5–21; T.V. Buttrey, 'Calculating Ancient Coin Production: Facts and Fantasies', *Numismatic Chronicle* 153 (1993), 338–345; *Idem*, 'Calculating Ancient Coin Production 2: Why it cannot be done', *Numismatic Chronicle* 154 (1999), 342–352; *Idem*, 'The Content and Meaning of Coin Hoards', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12 (1999), 526–532 (review article). Much more optimistic on the possibilities of quantification (in Leschhorn this case for provincial and civic coinage) than the just mentioned authors is W. Leschhorn, 'Die Kaiserzeitlichen Münzen Kleinasiens: Zu den Möglichkeiten und Schwierigkeiten ihrer statistischen Erfassung', *Revue Numismatique* 6e ser., 27 (1985), 200–216, but see A. Johnston, 'Greek Imperial Statistics: a Commentary', *Revue Numismatique* 6e ser., 26 (1984), 240–257.

It will be demonstrated that by the third century the coins' typology and iconography propagating dynastic themes and arrangements of succession as one means to demonstrate the potential of longevity and security of a reign, has become a kind of standard symbolic visual representation. Even emperors who had no such dynasty, no Caesar or co-Augustus in rule sometimes used dynastic symbols to emphasise their function as guarantors of all civil and military aspects of the Roman Empire, of *Roma aeterna*. This paper starts with an overview of dynastic themes on imperial coinage and then will give some examples of variations, traditions and innovations of this specific imperial imagery and ideology of the period concerned.

From the late first to the third century dynastic themes have been displayed on coins in two different ways: either with a reference to ancestors in commemorative issues, in the second and third century mainly by *consecratio*-types,[14] or with a reference to living family-members. The latter reference to either women of the imperial household or children, especially the Caesars, was made by

- coins of their own, that is, the family member with portrait and name on the obverse,[15]
- coins connecting the family member with the emperor by uniting them either on the obverse of the emperor with both emperor and family member with busts or heads on display on the obverse,[16]

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[14] Commemorative issues of the second century e.g.: *RIC* 3, 247 no. 431, *denarii*, Rome minted by Marcus Aurelius, obv.: DIVVS ANTONINVS; rev.: CONSECRATIO with an eagle standing on an altar with garlands; of the third century e.g.: Maximinus Thrax commemorating his wife Paulina *RIC* 4.2, 153 no. 2, *denarius*, Rome, obv.: DIVA PAVLINA Paulina bust veiled, rev.: CONSECRATIO Paulina holding sceptre, seated left on a peacock flying to heaven; Decius minted an extensive 'Divi'-series, with types of eleven Divi emperors from Augustus to Alexander Severus, e.g. *RIC* 4.3, 131 Decius no. 89, *antoniniani*, Milan; obv. Antoninus Pius radiated DIVO PIO, rev.: eagle CONSECRATIO.

[15] Dynastic themes on the family member's own coins, of the second century e.g.: *RIC* 2, 388 Hadrian no. 407, *denarius*, Rome, obv. Sabina's bust SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG. P. P., rev. Pudicitia standing left, raises her veil PVDICITIA; of the third century e.g.: *RIC* 4.2, 13 Macrinus no. 102, *Denarius* Rome, obv. Diadumenian with bare head M. OPEL. ANT. DIADVMENIAN CAES, rev. Caesar in military dress, holding standard and sceptre, two standards at left side PRINC IVVENTVTIS; *RIC* 4.3, 83 Philip I no. 125c, *antoniniani*, Rome, obv. M. OTACIL SEVERA AVG, rev. Concordia seated with *patera* and double *cornucopiae* CONCORDIA AVGG; *RIC* 5.2, 163 Carus no. 197, *antoniniani*, A.D. 282, Siscia, obv. Carinus Caesar with radiated crown M. AVR. CARINVS NOB CAES, rev. Carinus in military dress standing, holding spear and baton PRINCIPI IVVENTVTI (and sign of *officina*).

[16] Dynastic themes on the obverse in the third century e.g.: Gallienus, gold and silver medaillons, Rome, obv. *concordia Augg.* and busts of Gallienus and Salonina, *RIC* 5.1,

– coins linking one or more family member(s) to the emperor by representing the family member on the reverse of an emperor's coin with him on the obverse.[17]

Apart from the image of a family member and the legend with a name of a family member there are specific visual and verbal codes, indicators, marks as references to the dynastic ideal on coins, which came up and developed during the second century. One such visual code is the combination of someone's image together with the emperor either a co-ruler Augustus or Caesar or a female member or child of the emperor's family mostly with jugate heads or with *capita opposita*. The verbal codes are legends like CONCORDIA AVG. or AVGG. with *dextrarum iunctio* or similar images alluding to the harmony of the couple, the family or the rulers. This *concordia* legend was one of the first on display of a family-member's own coin and was used on a coin of Iulia, daughter of Titus.[18] SPES PVBLICA or similar legends refer to the hopeful future of the dynasty, especially to princes; it was introduced by Commodus Caesar under Marcus Aurelius,[19] whereas LAETITIA PVBLICA was in use since Faustina the younger,[20] daughter of Antoninus Pius and wife of Marcus Aurelius. The plural of Augustus and it's abbreviation on coins (AVGG. – AVGUSTI/AVGVSTORVM) as qualification and attribute of virtues and victories was a primary code of strength, for two (or even more) men with the highest authority and power protected the Empire and took care of the Roman people.

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105 no. 1; 106 no. 1 with rev. Valerian and Gallienus riding, preceded by Victory and accompanied by soldier; *RIC* 5.2, 152 no. 139 *antoniniani*, Lyon A.D. 282, obv. jugate busts of Carus radiated and Carinus bare-headed CARVS ET CARINVS AVGG., rev. Pax standing PAX AVG. and *officina* sign.

[17] Dynastic themes on the reverse of an emperor's coin, of the late second and third century e.g.: *RIC* 4.1, 115, Septimius Severus no. 181b, *Aureus*, Rome A.D. 202, obv. Severus' bust SEVERVS PIVS AVG. P. M. TR. P. X, rev. bust of Iulia Domna facing between busts of Caracalla and Geta; *RIC* 4.3, 73, Philip I no. 43a, *Denarius*, Rome, obv. Philip's bust IMP M IVL PHILIPPVS AVG., rev. confronted busts of Philip 2 Caesar (bare-headed) and Otacilia PIETAS AVGG.

[18] Iulia Titi and *concordia*: *BMCRE* 2, 279 no. 255*; *RIC* 2, 140 nos. 178–179.

[19] Commodus and *spes publica*: *BMCRE* 4, 480 nos. 654–657; 644 nos. 1530–1531; 646 no. 1536; *RIC* 3, 264 nos. 620–622; 335 nos. 1530–1531; 336 nos. 1543–1545.

[20] Faustina, wife of Marcus, and *laetitia publica: BMCRE* 4, 159–160 nos. 1046–1050; 372 nos. 2139–2141; 374–374 nos. 2155–2156; 402 nos. 125–131; 541 nos. 987–988; *RIC* 3, 94 no. 506; 192 no. 1378; 194 no. 1401; 270 nos. 699–703; 346 nos. 1653–1658.

PVDICITIA a reverse legend since Sabina,[21] wife of Hadrian, FECVNDITAS since Faustina the Younger,[22] PROPAGO IMPERII since Plautilla,[23] the different MATER combinations since Faustina the Younger,[24] the naming of female deities like Venus, Vesta, Ceres, Diana on coins,[25] – all these coin legend with matching images indicated a woman's sharing in the paragon-character of the imperial household, in the representation of Roman virtues, and were a visible expression of the prospering dynasty. PRINCEPS IVVENTVTIS with the image of a prince was the verbal code of a promising young man, a heir to the thrown, who showed off his military virtues and his leadership skills, being the most noble and the first of all aristocratic adolescents. This coin legend was introduced on a family member's own coin by Domitian Caesar,[26] whereas the princes of the early Principate, who had taken over the honour, received no official imperial coins of their own.[27] The first and most eminent feature in the subject of dynastic

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[21] Sabina and *pudicitia BMCRE* 3, 355 nos. 911–913; 537 nos. 1877–1878; *RIC* 2, 388 nos. 406–407; 389 no. 415; 477 nos. 1032–1033; 478 nos. 1042–1043.

[22] Faustina and *fecunditas Augustae BMCRE* 4, 398–399 nos. 89–95; 530–531 nos. 902–910; 540 nos. 977–982; *RIC* 3, 268–269 nos. 675–682; 345 nos. 1634–1641.

[23] Plautilla and *propago imperii*: *BMCRE* 5, 235–236 nos. 405–410; 322 no. +; *RIC* 4.1, 269 no. 362; 309 no. 578a; together with Caracalla: *RIC* 4.1, 222 no. 67.

[24] Faustina, wife of Marcus – *matri castrorum*, *BMCRE* 4, 534 nos. 929–931; 542 nos. 989–990; *RIC* 3, 346 nos. 1659–1664; Crispina, wife of Commodus – *matri castrorum BMCRE* 4, Commodus, 766 no. 418; Iulia Domna (Severus, Severus and Caracalla; Caracalla alone) – *mater deum, matri* or *mater castrorum, mater Aug(ustorum), mater senatus, mater patr(iae) BMCRE* 5.1, 163–64 nos. 47–59; 305 no. 760; 308–309 nos. 771*–774*; 312–13 nos. 788–792*; 432–433 nos. 11–18; 469 nos. 213–214; 472 no. 225; *RIC* 4.1, 168–69 nos. 562–570; 209 nos. 859–860; 210 nos. 879–884; 273, nos. 380–382a; 310 no. 588; 312 no. 601; Iulia Soaemias, mother of Elagabalus – *mater deum, RIC* 4.2, Elagabalus, 48–49 nos. 234–248. Cf. Iulia Mamaea – *mater castrorum, mater Augusti*, but on Severus Alexander's coins, *BMCRE* 6, 186–187 nos. 729–733 and 736; *RIC* 4.2, 96 no. 318*.

[25] For a general discussion of the verbal or iconographic association of imperial women with goddesses and personifications (not only in imperial coinage), see U. Hahn, *Die Frauen des römischen Kaiserhauses und ihre Ehrungen im griechischen Osten anhand epigraphischer und numismatischer Zeugnisse von Livia bis Sabina* (Saarbrücken 1994), 322–371; T. Mikocki, *Sub specie deae. Les impératrices et princesses romaines assimiliés à des déesse* (Rom 1995); A. Alexandridis, *Die Frauen des römischen Kaiserhauses. Eine Untersuchung ihrer bildlichen Darstellung von Livia bis Iulia Domna* (Mainz 2004), 307–378.

[26] Domitian as *princeps iuventutis* (under Vespasian) with own coins (*aurei, denarii, asses*): *BMCRE* 2, 29 nos. 154–156; 46–47 nos. 260–270; 66 no. 63; 100 no. 481; 171 no. §; 179 no. 747*; *RIC* 2, 41 no. 233; 42 no. 239; 43 nos. 243–46; 60 no. 380; 100 no. 728.

[27] Gaius and Lucius Caesares as *principes Iuventutis* on Augustus' coins in Lugdunum, *RIC* 1², 54 nos. 198–199 (Gaius); 55–56 nos. 205–212 (Gaius and Lucius). For the frequency of Gaius and Lucius and other family-members of the first emperors in civic and provincial coinage, see W. Trillmich, *Familienpropaganda der Kaiser Caligula*

aspects on Roman imperial coinage from the first to the third century is continuity: women as well as male members of the emperor's family remained one of the standard themes on coins issued in the imperial mints, however, as in earlier times, they were only a small part of the issued output, even if the number of types concerning the dynastic theme might be quite large. Although there existed this standard set of words and images on coins for the representation of family members from the end of the first to the end of the third century, there were as well constant additions and changes in choices of legends and imagery from the beginning of such representations. Nevertheless, some distinct features in the third century coinage can be noted.

Building a dynasty with gods and deities

The standard features established in the second century and used throughout the entire third century were the already noted *Pudicitia, Fecunditas, Concordia*, Venus Genetrix, Iuno Regina and Vesta legends on the reverses of the empresses and the *Princeps Iuventutis, Felicitas Publica* and/or *Spes Publica* legends on the reverses of the Caesar's coins.

Changes of the visual codes occurred only late and they are limited to a small period of time. They started in the Gallic empire (A.D. 260–274) and were taken over by Probus in the late 270th. Instead of a second living person associated with a portrait to the emperor, Postumus, Victorinus, and Probus chose obverses only resembling the typical dynastic type with two family members or two co-rulers.[28] In 263, Postumus issued gold medaillons, *aurei*, golden *quinarii*, silver *antoniniani*,

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und Claudius: Agrippina Maior und Antonia Augusta auf Münzen (Berlin 1978), passim; D. Boschung, *Gens Augusta. Untersuchungen zu Aufstellung, Wirkung und Bedeutung der Statuengruppen des julisch-claudischen Kaiserhauses* (Mainz 2002), passim; M. Horster, 'Multiple Portraits of Members of Roman Imperial Families in Provincial Coinage', in C. Alfaro, C. Marcos and P. Otero (eds.), *Actas del XIII Congreso Internacional de Numismática Madrid 2003* (Madrid), 863–865.

[28] Postumus and Hercules as jugate busts are combined with different reverses: B. Schulte, *Die Goldprägung der gallischen Kaiser von Postumus bis Tetricius* (Aarau, Frankfurt am Main und Salzburg 1983), 102–119 nos. 108–163, e.g. 119 no. 161, Cologne A.D. 269: obv. POSTVMVS PIVS FELIX AVG jugate busts of Postumus laureate, cuirassed, draped and of Hercules laureate, rev. radiate, draped bust of Sol PACATOR ORBIS, cf. G. Elmer, 'Die Münzprägung der gallischen Kaiser in Köln, Trier und Mailand', *Bonner Jahrbücher* 146 (1941), 1–106, especially 37–38; in addition, Postumus minted a hole gold series of 'Labours of Heracles' in A.D. 267/268, see Schulte 1983, 106–117 nos. 120–155, cf. Elmer 1941, 37, Drinkwater 1987, op. cit. (n. 9) 162–64, 173–174.

denarii and *quinarii* of the mint at Cologne with his head or bust on display jugated with the bust of Hercules.[29] Similar types were chosen by Victorinus in 269/270 joining his portrait with either Sol or Mars.[30] Both, Postumus and Victorinus combined these obverses most often with different types of representations of Victoria on the reverses.[31]

This fake-family or fake-co-rulership might be seen as a deliberate choice to emphasise the support and help of their favourite gods, gods being stronger and better co-rulers than a second Augustus or Caesar would be. This kind of imagery did not become wide-spread and was only followed by Probus (A.D. 276–282) with his heavenly co-ruler Sol, the god ensuring the security of the empire as the coin's message notifies.[32]

However, this choice was made due to a lack of alternatives. And at least in the case of the usurpers of the Gallic empire it was meant to demonstrate dynastic strength even without dynasty, a strength equal or superior to the simultaneously reigning emperor Gallienus' who had represented his dynasty on many coin types depicting Salonina and their sons Valerian II and Saloninus.[33] This imagery of pseudo-dynastic propaganda is paired by Postumus with coin legends suitable of dynastic propaganda like FELICITAS AVGVSTI, PROVIDENTIA AVG. and SAECVLI FELICITAS, even though in earlier as in later times such legends were already used not only exclusively in the dynastic contexts.[34] It seems likely that apart from some very specific and individual coin types the Gallic usurpers were looking at Rome and Roman coinage not only in categories of adequate and accepted

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[29] *RIC* 5.2, 357 no. 254 = Cohen 44 (gold medaillon); 358–359 nos. 260–264, 267, 271–274 and 283 and further references in note 28 above.

[30] Victorinus: obv. jugate busts of emperor and Sol or Mars on *aurei*, *RIC* 5.2, 389 no. 21, 25 and 30, cf. 29.

[31] Postumus and Victoria, e.g. Schulte 1983, op. cit. (n. 28), 102–103 nos. 108–110; Victorinus' propagation of victory (cf. Schulte 130–131 nos. 2–7; 132–133 nos. 10–12; 137 no. 29) may be associated with his victory at Autun, cf. Drinkwater 1987, op. cit. (n. 9), 181–182 with further references and discussion.

[32] Probus and Sol: Kent/Hirmer 548, cf. *RIC* 5.2, 80 no. 596 (with variant), *Aureus*, Siscia, obv. jugate busts of Probus laureate, cuirassed and of Sol radiate, draped, rev. *Securitas* seated left on throne, holding sceptre in right hand, resting her left on the top of the head SECVRITAS SAECULI (and SIS *officina* mark).

[33] For another aspect of this kind of iconographic rivalry on coins of Gallienus and Postumus, see Claire Grandvallet's paper in the present volume.

[34] *Antoniniani* with *felicitas*, Elmer 1941, op. cit. (no. 28), no. 335, *providentia*. no. 337 ca. A.D. 263, *saeculi felicitas* no. 593 in A.D. 268, but see Drinkwater 1987, op. cit. (n. 9), 152–153, for the date of the later coin, which should be attributed to a time earlier in Postumus' reign.

representations of Victory and Peace on coins but also in the propagation of dynastic stability even in cases when they were not able to present such a dynasty of their own.

Even more widespread than these striking examples of 'misuse' or, better to say, of an 'abstract' use of a concrete concepts – family, dynasty – were changes in the character and meaning of the verbal codes as will be demonstrated by few examples.

Augusti, Augustae, Augustorum

The plural *Augustorum* which does not refer to two male Augusti but to one Augustus and his empress, the Augusta, occurred on coins for the first time with Gordian III and his wife Sabinia Tranquillina with *Concordia Augg*. reverses.[35] The legend *Concordia Augg*. reverse legend was also used by Philip I and his wife Otacilia Severa,[36] Philip Caesar used the same legend and *Pietas Augustorum* as well,[37] whereas on Otacilia Severa's coins *Pietas Augustae* referred to her own *pietas* and the plural was probably used only later, when Philip II had become Augustus.[38]

Fecunditas was used exclusively for women, but with a *Fecunditas Augustorum* type of Herennia Etruscilla,[39] her husband Decius is obviously included in this legend on *antoninani* and *sestertii* minted in Rome between

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[35] *RIC* 4.3, 41 nos. 249–250 and 252–253 *antoniniani* and silver *quinarii*; 53 nos. 340, 341a *sestertii*; no. 341b *asses*; 341c *dupondii*.

[36] *RIC* 4.3, 83 no. 125a *aurei*, Rome, obv. bust of Otacilia M OTACIL SEVERA AVG, rev. Concordia seated holding *patera* and two *cornucopiae* CONCORDIA AVGG, cf. *RIC* 4.3, 83 no. 119a *quinarii*; no. 119b *antoniniani*.

[37] *RIC* 4.3, 85 no. 215 *antoniniani*, Rome, obv. head of Philip M IVL PHILIPPVS CAES, rev. sprinkler, simpulum, jug, knife, lituus PIETAS AVGVSTORVM.

[38] The gold medaillon has Philip 2 Caesaron the obverse, but the reverse with CONCORDIA AVGVSTORVM refers to the Augusti Philip I and Otacilia *RIC* 4.3, 97 no. 222; *Pietas Augustorum* on the reverse: *antoniniani*, Rome *RIC* 4.3, 215 with Philip Caesaron the obverse; *sestertii* and *asses RIC* 4.3, 95 nos. 212 a–b for Philip I and the bare-headed Cesar Philip 2. With inclusion of the female Augusta in the Augustorum legend in the Roman mint: *pietas Augg.* for Otacilia (and Philip I) on *sestertii* and *asses RIC* 4.3, 93 no. 198a–b, *saeculares Augg.* in 248 for Otacilia (and Philip I and their son Philip 2) *sestertii*, *dupondii* and *asses RIC* 4.3, 95, nos 199a–c and 202a–d. In theory the last mentioned *saeculares* and *pietas Augg*. legends could also refer to the two male Augusti alone, but this seems rather farfetched as these reverse legends are presented on Otacilia's coins, her bust and legend on the obverse.

[39] *RIC* 4.3, 127 no. 56, *antoniniani*, Rome, obv. bust of Herennia HER. ETRVSCILLA AVG., rev. *Fecunditas* standing with *patera* and *cornucopia*, with child at her foot FECVNDITAS AVGG, *sestertii* and *asses*, 137 no. 135.

249 and 251, even in the case that at this time her son Herennius was already co-ruler Augustus for whom the reference to *fecunditas* would be even more senseless. On coins of Herennius Etruscus, *nobilissimus* Caesar and *princeps iuventutis*, some reverses have the plural *Augusti/ Augustorum* referring either to his parents, Etruscilla and Decius, or to himself and his father.[40]

Pax Augustorum is found on *antoniniani* and *aes* coinage of Volusian Caesar and his father Trebonian in 251, his father being sole emperor.[41] In 253, Aemilian and his wife Cornelia Supera used the *Concordia Augustorum* legend again.[42] At that time, the plural for emperor and empress seems to have been established on coins as can be seen e.g. with Aurelian and Severina at the beginning of the 270th. The plural *Augustorum* was also used sometimes in later reigns not only for *Concordia* and *Pietas* but for other virtues of the emperors and the family members as well, thus *Pax Augg.* and *Virtus Augg.* legends on *asses* and *quinarii* of Carinus Caesar in Rome which must have referred to the excellent virtue of Carus Augustus and Carinus Caesar and the peace the Augustus and his Caesar guaranteed.[43] In Antioch the *Virtus Augustorum* was even referring to three 'Augusti' on coins of both Caesars, Numerian and Carinus; it blurred the difference in age, authority and power and melted the Caesars and the Augustus into an imperial triad.[44] At least in coin legends, the way towards the tetrarchic regime was prepared.

Adult Principes Iuventutis

A second strong verbal code in the dynastic context is the combination of a Caesar's coin with the *princeps iuventutis* legend. This legend occurred

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[40] *RIC* 4.3, 138 no. 138 *antoniniani*, Rome, obv. Q HER ETR MES DECIVS C, rev. two clasped right hands CONCORDIA AVGG; *aurei* and *antoniniani* nos. 142–143 with rev. PIETAS AVGG.

[41] *RIC* 4.3, 174 no. 133 *antoniniani*; 187 no. 240 *dupondii* or *asses*.

[42] *RIC* 4.3, 197 no. 28; 202 no. 64.

[43] Carinus Caesar: *Pietas Augg. RIC* 5.2, 157 nos. 155–157 *antoniniani*; *Virtus Augg.* 158 no. 164 *denarii*; 159 no. 171 *quinarii*; *Pax Augustorum* 159 no. 173 *asses*; no. 175 *semisses*. Cf. similar legends used in the Siscia mint on *aurei*: *Victoria Augg.* on reverses of Carinus Caesar's obverses, *RIC* 5.2, 161–162 nos. 191–193.

[44] Carinus Caesar with VIRTVS AVGG on the reverse *RIC* 5.3, 164 no. 208 *antoniniani*, Numerianus Caesar *RIC* 5.3, 190 no. 375 *aurei*; 191 nos. 378–379 *antoniniani*; cf. CONSERVATOR AVGGG. (i.e. Sol protecting the empire) on Numerian Caesar's *aurei* minted in Antioch, *RIC* 5.3, 190 no. 373.

first on the own coins of the imperial family-members in connection with issues of Domitian Caesar;[45] it was in continued use for nearly all Caesars of the second and third centuries.

When Philip Caesar was about 10 year old, he was given the title of Augustus in A.D. 247 and one of the first issues that recorded his new status seems to be a rare *antoninianus*[46] with the same die as an *aureus* which had been used for him as Caesar in Rome: the new Augustus is still characterised as *princeps iuventutis*. It is unknown if this is the mint's error, or if Philippus Arabs thought it appropriate for a young boy to be *princeps iuventutis* even as Augustus. But subsequently, *princeps iuventutis* was in all probability used for adult *Augusti*: Trebonian and Volusian used this title as *Augusti*, although for the *sestertii* of Trebonian, the Roman mint-masters seem to have used a reverse die of Hostilian Caesar.[47] It is difficult to decide whether such issues as well as those of for example the *vota decennalia* for Trebonian and Volusian are hybrids with accidentally mismatched obverses and legends,[48] or if such coin reverses were deliberate choices, therewith demonstrating the complete ignorance of understanding of the intentions and messages of such legends. In any case, traditions of verbal markers to denote the longevity of a dynasty with references to a young Caesar and *princeps iuventutis* as potential heir to the thrown are seriously disturbed.

If the Lugdunum mint-masters or the emperors Valerian and/or Gallien made a deliberate choice to connect the emperor with the *princeps iuventutis* honour for Gallien Augustus at the beginning of his shared reign with his father Valerian, starting in A.D. 253, is also open to question.[49] These *antoniniani* of Lugdunum are rare and were probably minted only at the very beginning of the reign. At the latest they were issued before A.D. 256, when Gallien's younger brother Valerian II was made Caesar and *princeps iuventutis*, both titles displayed on several coin issues of different mints.[50]

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[45] Cf. above notes 26 and 27 with references.

[46] Cohen 51 = *RIC* 4.3, 96 no. 218 (with var.).

[47] *RIC* 4.3, 172 nos. 118 and 119 Trebonian; 179 no. 183 Volusian.

[48] *Vota decenalia* on coins of short reigns, e.g. Gordian III, *RIC* 4.3, 17 no. 14, Volusian Caesar's coins issued during the short reign of his father Trebonian, *RIC* 4.3, 187 no. 243.

[49] *RIC* 5.1, 70 no. 26.

[50] Valerian Caesar as *princeps iuventutis*: Lugdunum *RIC* 5.1, 116 no. 5; Rome 117 no. 11, 119 nos. 29–30, 120 no. 34; Antioch 120 nos. 37–40.

Probably at the beginning of his reign in A.D. 276, Probus Augustus had *aurei* minted in Cyzicus and *antoniniani* minted in Ticinum with the *princeps iuventutis* legend.[51] The Ticinum mint kept this 'tradition' and issued coins for Carinus Augustus and Numerian Augustus with the *princeps iuventutis* title respectively, using different reverse dies as those they had used for *princeps iuventutis* coins earlier in the reign of Carus, when both Carinus and Numerian had still been Caesars.[52] But this does not mean that the Ticinum mint was extraordinarily careless or ignorant – even in Rome, the emperor Carus was presented on Roman *semisses* as 'First of the Youth', and Numerian had *princeps iuventutis* coins as Caesar and as Augustus in Rome as well.[53] It may be that in the case of the Roman Carus coin, the coin is a hybrid and it was Carinus, his son, who was intended to be meant by this reference; but the combination was of an emperor's bust and name on the obverse with a *princeps iuventutis* reverse. Actually, Carinus Caesar had his own coins referring rightly to the youth-title, for which coins different dies were used than for his father's coins.[54] However, at least in the specific case of the Roman Carus coin, it seems quite obvious that the mint-masters had mistakenly used a previously unknown reverse die of one of the Caesars for Carus Augustus' coins as well.

If at least some of these Augustus/*princeps iuventutis* combinations had been a deliberate choice either by the emperor or by one of the responsible mint-masters, this would indicate that the *princeps iuventutis* honour and title had become a formula representing a general code for dynasty and security. In case that all these examples of rare coins are hybrids, that is to say, that they have been the result of a inadvertent mix of dies, which had been intended and used for other coins, then

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[51] *RIC* 5.2, 115 no. 892, *Aureus*, Cyzicus, obv. bust of Probus IMP PROBVS AVG., rev. Emperor standing right, holding spear and globe PRINCIPIS IVVENTVTI (sic); cf. *RIC* 5.2, 49 no. 318 Ticinum. Probus' mints of Ticinum and Siscia issued large series of *antoniniani* over a long period of time with the legend *concordia militum* on the reverse, thus emphasising the *concordia* between emperor and army. In addition to these series, both mints also issued coins with *concordia Augusti* – although for Probus, as far as we know, there was no partner for this kind of *concordia*, harmony, no other Augustus, no female Augusta, no Caesar, *RIC* 4.3, 51 nos. 323–324 (Ticinum); 88 nos. 658–662 (Siscia).

[52] Carinus Augustus: *RIC* 5.2, 174 nos. 99–100; Numerian Augustus 199 nos. 444–445.

[53] Carus: *RIC* 5.2, 142 no. 61; Numerian Aug.: 196 nos. 417–421, *antoniniani*.

[54] Carinus Caesar with *princeps iuventutis* legends in Lugdunum, Cyzicus, Ticinum and Siscia and Rome, e.g. *RIC* 5.2, 156 no. 147 Lugdunum; 158 nos. 158–161 Rome *antoniniani*, 159 no. 81 *asses*, 159 no. 176 *semisses*.

this would mean that – not only in times of short-term emperors like Trebonian, for whom it seems likely that he was unable to give orders to all mints, but also in more stable and longer reigns – mints were not minting according to the emperor's intentions.

Out of control?

One of the striking examples of an imperial mint out of the control of any authority understanding the Latin language or at least the intended meaning of coin legends and images is Antioch, which – during a short period of time – obviously had no superior Roman official to lead and control it, or if it had one, he was himself unable to fulfil his task in a sensible and reasonable manner. In the years A.D. 249–251, under Decius, Trebonian and Volusian, on the obverses of the *antoniniani* issued in the mint of Antioch the legends with the names of Hostilian and Herennius Etruscus were a complete mess and unrecognisable. But even worse appears the matching of *Pudicitia* (which was not only a typical legend and virtue proper of an empress, but also completely absurd and senseless for a man) with the emperors and princes and instead issued the *aequitas* reverse of the emperor Decius for Herennia Etruscilla and the two Caesars.[55]

Apart from the FECVNDITAS legend already mentioned for Herennia and Decius in the Roman mint a more striking feature is the reference to female deities, which increased significantly on emperors coins in the third century. The traditional Roman deities Iuno, Minerva, Vesta and Venus had been depicted on emperor's coins before, but rather quite sparingly, whereas female personifications such as *Victoria, Fortuna, Pietas, Concordia*, or *Providentia* were always prominent in the emperor's coinage of the second and third centuries. These goddesses had been honoured on coins already in the first two centuries on emperor's coins, but to a much smaller extent. The number of explicit references to female deities Iuno, Minerva and Venus augmented in the third century.[56]

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[55] *Pudicitia* and Decius: *RIC* 4.3, 125 nos. 46a–b; Hostilian 146 no. 196a; Trebonian 168 no. 88; Volusian 185 nos. 232–233. *Aequitas* and Herennia 128–129 nos. 63–64; Herennius Caesar 140–141 nos. 157a–d; Hostilian 146 nos. 194a–c.

[56] Even Diana Lucifera, the goddess of Aricia, a women' deity and cult, was not left out as the rare *aureus* of Postumus in Cologne demonstrates, *Numismatica Ars Classica*

On the other side, Faustina the Younger and Iulia Domna, who both had few somewhat 'masculine' coin-legends, were followed in the mid-third century by Salonina, wife of Gallien. All three empresses used not only the empress-typical coins with Venus or Venus Genetrix, but used for example Venus Victrix on their coins, the very Venus referred to on coins of emperors and the princes;[57] *aequitas* and *moneta Augusta* or *Augustorum* legends and matching images on empresses' coin-reverses started with Iulia Domna and were taken over by Salonina.[58] And the latter introduced *fides militum*, reflected by *concordia militum* in the coinage of Aurelian's wife Severina.[59] But even empresses, such as Otacilia Severa in the 240th, who, different from Salonina, were more conservative in their coin legends, used legends of their husbands. In the case of Otacilia it was the *securitas orbis* legend, and there were different variations of coin types referring to Rome's millenium-festival.[60] However, most coin images and legends of the third century empresses continued the path with quite narrow limits of the female propriety, never using any of the extravagant and masculine variants of a Faustina, Iulia Domna or Salonina.

Auction June 25, 2003, no. 559: *Aureus*, Cologne ca. A.D. 260–269, obv. bust of Postumus, POSTVMVS PIVS AVG., rev. Diana advancing with bow and quiver on shoulder, holding torch with both hands DIANA LVCIFERA. For a discussion of the association of Diana on Gallienus' coins, see De Blois 1976, op. cit. (n. 1), 163–164, even though his sophisticated interpretation of Plotinus' influence visible on such an imagery might be somewhat farfetched, especially because coins in honour of Diana Lucifera were already minted by Gordian III and other emperors, e.g. *RIC* 4.3, 28 no. 127.

[57] Salonina and Venus Victrix: *RIC* 5.1, 108 nos. 3 and 8 (Lugdunum); 113 no. 37 (Rome), 115 no. 68 (Asia).

[58] Salonina and *aequitas publica: RIC* 5.1, 109–10 nos. 16–19, 112 no. 44 (Rome); and *moneta Augg*: 110 no. 22 (Rome).

[59] Salonina and *fides militum: RIC* 5.1, 192 no. 7, 195 no. 36 (Rome); Severina and *concordia militum: RIC* 5.2, 315–318 nos. 1–2, 4, 8, 11, 13, 18 and 20 (Lugdunum, Rome, Ticinum, Siscia, Cyzicus, Antioch). On the interpretation of these *concordia militum* series in the context of Aurelian's death and a discussion on an alleged 'interregnum' of Severina, see Göbl 1993, op. cit. (n. 11), 29–30, 47–48, 56, 60, 65 and 68.

[60] *Securitas* on Otacilia's *aurei: RIC* 4.3, 83 no. 124a; legends *saeculares Augg*, *saeculum* novum, *miliarium saeculum* on *aurei, antoniniani, sestertii, asses* and *dupondii: RIC* 4.3, 82 nos. 116a–118; 93 nos. 199a–202d.

Conclusions

The shifts of meaning in the case of the *Augustorum* use demonstrates that in some cases the emperor (and his entourage) intended a change in the use of words to strengthen the dynastic moment by the use of the Augustus-plural until then used exclusively for co-rulers, which were now used for Augustus and Augusta or Augustus and the Caesar.[61] This does not mean that the position, the potential of influence of an empress or Caesar was strengthened. It seems as if the mere existence of the family, the dynasty was intended to be propagated as a powerful potential in analogy to the existence of a second strong adult man. The choice of double portraits of Postumus, Victorinus and Probus with gods point to the same intention: to propagate a dynastic strength, to refer to two powerful rulers.

However, for modern interpretations of propaganda and policy of coin messages it should be a warning, that as in the *pudicitia*-Antiochia affair or perhaps also in at least some of the 'Augustus as *princeps iuventutis*' combinations, the mint-masters and inferior officials appear sometimes to have lost sense of the traditional meaning. Additionally, at the beginning of a reign, emperors were not always in full control of all mints, and might not have seen this as their first duty and primary challenge. But the 'hybrids' (unintentionally or intentionally matched obverses and reverses of different emperors or family members) and many other coins such as the already mentioned *vota decennalia* ones, were coins used and looked at in the same way as coins where an emperor had made a deliberate choice of new coin images and legends or had decided to refer to traditional coin images, gods, virtues et cetera. Perhaps some members of the higher strata of the populace in the Roman Empire noted slight changes or realised that a coin reverse was a hybrid that mixed up dies, but these phenomena were widespread in the third century and not reduced to the coins referring to the dynastic ideal.

The few selected examples discussed in this paper demonstrate that some codes, visual and verbal, lost their specific meaning in the course of the third century. They continued to be used, but sometimes

[61] A similar shift occurred with the *Nobilitas* legend, and the *nobilissimus* Caesar title, which also lost its intended meaning at its starting point with *Nobilitas Augg*. Commodus compared to its use under Philip, as C. Körner, *Philippus Arabs. Ein Soldatenkaiser in der Tradition des antoninisch-severischen Prinzipats* (Berlin and New York 2002), 107–108, has pointed out.

perverted or, at least, without the specific context they were meant to refer to. This was not a linear development and it does not mean that the dynastic ideal was lost or renounced. On the contrary, as far as an emperor had control of his mints, he seems to have used the codes and indicators of reference to dynasty to stress and emphasise the strength and longevity of his reign.

Berlin, November 2006

THE EMPLOYMENT OF EPITHETS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER. A CASE STUDY

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The clearest expression of Roman imperial rule in Egypt was the presence of Roman power, embodied by administrators and keepers of law and order.[1] The provincial administration of Egypt was left to the prefect of Egypt and some other Roman officials, whereas Roman troops were based in Egypt to maintain order and to assist the administrators. However, the Roman emperor was represented not only through these proxies, but also in a less direct way. First, a programme of visual representation was developed for the emperor. The emperor's images were impressed upon the subjects' minds by means of coins, statues, paintings and other artefacts.[2] Second, through imperial titulature the emperor was represented in words. Imperial titulature is informative on imperial representation, since the constituent parts of the titulature illuminate different aspects of the imperial legitimation (dynastic, military, religious). So, by means of imperial titulature an emperor communicated specific virtues and qualities, demonstrating that he was the right man to fulfill the emperorship.[3] This strategy of

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[1] Substantial parts of this article are derived from the discussion of imperial titulature and new imperial epithets in third-century titulature in the third chapter of my dissertation *Emperors in Egypt. The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power in Greek Papyrus Texts from Egypt, A.D. 193–284* (Diss. Nijmegen 2006), where the topic is addressed in greater detail.

[2] Other ways in which the emperor was made visible to the provincial inhabitants are, for instance, the imperial cult, including festivals in honour of the emperor or one of the members of his family, or by other forms of communication, such as the sending of letters or edicts.

[3] On Roman imperial titulature, that is primarily known from inscriptions, coins, and papyri, see M. Hammond, 'Imperial Elements in the Formula of the Roman Emperors during the first two and a half Centuries of the Empire', *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 25 (1957), 19–64; Id., *The Antonine Monarchy* (Rome 1959); R. Syme, 'Imperator Caesar: a Study in Nomenclature', *Historia* 7 (1958), 172–188 = *Roman Papers* I (1979), 361–377; M. Peachin, *Roman Imperial Titulature and Chronology, A.D. 235–284* (Amsterdam 1990); D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle. Grundzüge einer römischen Kaiserchronologie*, (Darmstadt 1996²).

visual and textual representation of the emperor was a sophisticated means to make up for the emperor's absence in Egypt.

Due to the papyrological evidence from Egypt, this province offers a unique possibility to investigate the aforementioned strategy of imperial representation. Many references to the visibility of the Roman emperor are made in papyri, suggesting that the inhabitants of Egypt were often confronted with their Roman rulers.[4] Furthermore, in Egypt Roman emperors are frequently attested in written documents, since these were dated according to the current emperor's regnal year, which was done by referring to his name(s) and/or titles.

In this article, I will demonstrate that the imperial titulature employed in these documents is informative on the Roman imperial presentation in Egypt. This will be endeavoured through a case study of the epithet ἀήττητος (Lat. *invictus,* 'invincible'). In my view, the employment of this epithet reflects one aspect of the imperial representation of Septimius Severus and Caracalla. In what follows, I will first make some general observations to imperial titulature. Next, I will discuss the employment of the epithet ἀήττητος in Greek papyrus documents. To conclude, the outcome of the analysis will be placed within the framework of the representation and perception of Roman imperial power in third-century Egypt.

Although the scope of this case study is limited, I think that the implications are more broadly applicable. Imperial representation, also by means of titulature, was always an important concomitant feature of the emperorship. After two centuries of relative peace and quietness, the third century can be seen as a tumultuous period in which many developments took place, both in the empire and in the presentation of the emperorship. In the struggle for emperorship, that was especially manifest in the second half of the third century, emperors still emphasized the qualities that legitimized their right to the throne. The result of the third-century crisis of empire and emperorship was a new, divinely legitimized, emperorship, that was founded by Diocletian. The processes leading to this adaptation can be traced back to earlier times. Emperors themselves were continuously experimenting with their representation, and their initiatives were picked up by their subjects. On the other hand, the initiative in expressing certain qualities

[4] For different aspects of the visibility of the emperor in Egypt, see De Jong 2006, op. cit. (n. 1), 50–83.

they attributed to their emperor could also be taken by others, such as administrative officials or the provincial inhabitants, as the following case study aims to demonstrate.

Roman imperial titulature and Greek papyri

In order to indicate his special position, the emperor of the Roman empire could add a whole series of elements to his personal names.[5] Although the general importance of imperial titulature has been noted by scholars since long, many basic questions relating to imperial titulature, such as how the imperial titles were conveyed to the emperor or whether we can speak of 'official' titulature, cannot be answered adequately. Since within imperial titulature so many different aspects of the emperorship are combined, unifying real powers with ideology, a better understanding of the imperial titulature will contribute to a better understanding of the complex of imperial representation. This implies that the imperial titulature should not only be considered as a whole, but that also each of the constituting elements should be given attention. Since papyrological documents often contain imperial titulature, they provide a good basis from where to start an analysis.

The imperial titulature found in papyri varies from the simple use of the emperor's name to an elaborate series of titles, in which even republican offices are mentioned.[6] This could suggest that the imperial titulature used in papyrus texts was chosen by scribes at random, and many elements employed can be considered standard elements. However, analysis of the imperial titulature occurring in third-century papyrus texts shows that the imperial titulature used not always existed of the elements that in the course of the first and second century had become standard constituents of the imperial titulature. In the third century B.C., some new elements are encountered in the Greek imperial titulature in papyrus texts, that can be classified as epithets. These

[5] The imperial titulature in papyrus documents from the first three centuries of our era consists of one or more of the following parts: the imperial indicator Αὐτοκράτωρ Καῖσαρ Σεβαστός; the emperor's *praenomen* and/or *nomen gentile* and/or *cognomen*; honorific epithets; victory titles; dynastic references; republican offices.

[6] Depending on the purpose of the titulature. In imperial announcements, usually the full Roman titulature was employed, whereas for a common dating formula the variation was wideranging. See P. Bureth, *Les Titulatures impériales dans les papyrus, les ostraca et les inscriptions d'Égypte (30 a.C.–284 p.C.)* (Bruxelles 1964).

new epithets can be distinguished into official or unofficial epithets.[7] This relates to the question whether we can speak of 'official imperial titulature' or not. Although this delicate matter is not directly answered by papyrus documents, some assumptions can be made. First, the analysis of imperial titulature in Greek papyri in my view suggests that there was a standard imperial titulature. With standard I mean that the titulature of the individual emperors consisted of certain elements that were probably attributed to them officially by the senate or the army. Although it is very difficult to establish how this process of conveying imperial titulature to the emperor worked, comparison of the attested titles between and within the different types of sources may be revealing as to which are the regular elements of a certain emperor's titulature and what are exceptional elements.[8] Second, it is reasonable to assume that this standard titulature was established at Rome. How this Roman standard was dealt with in the provinces is another point that is not completely clear. For the Latin speaking provinces there was no problem, but in the Greek speaking provinces the Latin imperial titulature needed to be translated into Greek. Usually, the translation of Roman terminology into Greek did not cause problems, because there were fixed Greek technical terms for Roman institutions.[9] In the case of imperial titulature, however, the prescriptions for translation are not known for sure, and maybe the Roman policy changed over time.[10]

Regarding the new epithets appearing in third-century papyrus texts, some criteria that are helpful for deciding whether they were official or not are the frequency of its use and the context of its employment. If

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[7] For a collection and examination of new epithets occurring for the first time in imperial titulature in third-century papyrus texts, and their implications for the representation and perception of imperial power in the third century, see De Jong 2006, op. cit. (n. 1), 84–135.

[8] A good point of departure is constituted by military diplomas, for these would give the emperor's official designations in most complete form. With coins, inscriptions and papyri, the number of elements could also depend on practical reasons, such as the available space of the medium.

[9] H.J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions: a Lexicon and Analysis* (Toronto 1974).

[10] Cf. for example the Greek rendering in papyri of the Roman epithet *nobilissimus*, that in the third century became a standard epithet for the designated emperor. As F. Mitthof, 'Vom ἱερώτατος Kaisar zum ἐπιφανέστατος Kaisar. Die Ehrenprädikate in der Titulatur der Thronfolger des 3. Jh. n. Chr. nach den Papyri', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 99 (1993), 97–111, has pointed out, the Greek rendering of this Latin epithet initially varied, until it was standardized into ἐπιφανέστατος at the end of the third century.

an epithet occurs only sporadically, and in other contexts than the one that would be expected if it were regular part of the titulature, i.e. in dating or oath formulas, it can be assumed that the epithet was not a standard part of the Roman imperial titulature. An example of such an irregular new element in third-century Greek imperial titulature is the epithet ἀήττητος, that will be discussed next.

Context and employment of the epithet ἀήττητος in imperial titulature

Hornickel's description of this predicate as "Ehrenprädikat römischer und byzantinischer Herrscher und des römischen Lagers in der Zeit der syrisch-punischen Kaiser" is still largely true. But how common was the epithet, and how is its employment related to the representation of the imperial power? In what follows, the third-century papyrological evidence for the epithet will be discussed.

'Αήττητος occurs in documents as part of the imperial titulature of the current emperor(s), usually preceding the word αὐτοκράτωρ or the emperor's personal name. The epithet's employment in imperial titulature in papyrus texts is rather limited.[11] In seven documents the epithet is part of the titles of Septimius Severus and Caracalla. It appears five times in the titulature of Caracalla during his sole rule. After Caracalla, the term disappears for a while, to reappear in a reference dated to the reign of Gallienus. After that, the epithet is attested in documents dated to the reign of Diocletian and Maximianus,[12] and to the reign of Constantine.[13] After Constantine, the epithet is attested only once more, in an imperial title from the sixth century.[14]

In four instances, the context of the epithet ἀήττητος referring to Septimius Severus and Caracalla is closely related, as it is used in a sentence referring to an imperial decree. The first of these texts is *SB*

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[11] O. Hornickel, *Ehren- und Rangprädikate in den Papyrusurkunden. Ein Beitrag zum römischen und byzantinischen Titelwesen* (Diss. Gießen 1930), 1, can be supplemented by a search of *The Duke Databank of Documentary Papyri*, accessible online at: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cache/perscoll_DDBDP.html. Cf. Bureth 1964, op. cit. (n. 6), 98. The papyrological references to ἀήττητος between 193–284 are given in my table at the end of this article.

[12] *Pap.Agon.* 3 (A.D. 289).

[13] *P.Gen.* 2 App. 1 (A.D. 319) = SB 16.12530; *P.Gen.* 1. 21 (A.D. 320); *P.Oxy.* 43 (1975) 3122 of A.D. 322.

[14] In an oath formula: *PSI* 1.76a (A.D. 572–573).

12.10884, a letter from a *strategos* to a colleague about the matter of people dwelling in places outside their own district. The issue was not new, as becomes clear from the author's reference to previous orders (ll. 5–7) "of our greatest and most divine, invincible lords the Emperors (τῶν κυρίων ἡμῶν μεγίστων καὶ θειοτάτων ἀηττήτων Αὐτοκρατόρων)" concerning this topic and to the writing of the prefect about this subject. Since this document contains official correspondence, it can be assumed that the *strategos* is using official language to refer to the emperors. Besides the epithet ἀήττητος, another epithet, θειότατος, is used. The employment of both epithets ἀήττητος and θειότατος in the imperial formula also occurs in two other documents, which refer to the same edict ordering people who are away from their own *idia* to return.[15]

The second related text is *SB* 1.4284, a petition from public farmers to a *strategos*. The farmers state that, responding to an imperial edict of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, they have gone to their own districts. When they were working land there, they were harassed by some culprits. In lines 6–8 the reference is made to a decree and benefactions of the emperors: "Our most divine and invincible lords (οἱ κύριοι ἡμῶν θειότατοι καὶ ἀήττητοι) the emperors Severus and Antoninus rising up [as the sun] in their own Egypt, granted very many good things, and also wanted that all persons who were dwelling in other places would return to their own houses, [Severus and Antoninus] making an end to violence and lawlessness, and according to their sacred orders we have gone back." It could be that the petitioners in this phrase have taken over the language used in the original imperial decree. An argument in favour of this hypothesis is that, like in in *SB* 12.10884, the two epithets ἀήττητοι and θειότατοι are used. In the dating formula (lines 23–24) these epithets are lacking. The two texts discussed so far refer to an imperial decree of Severus and Caracalla. According to Thomas this is one and the same decree, that is also referred to in lines 6–9 of *P.Oxy*. 47 (1980) 3364, a petition to the prefect of Egypt, in which a certain Heraklides complains that he is being bothered by

[15] *SB* 1.4284; *P.Oxy*. 47 (1980) 3364. For *idia*, 'recorded domicile', see M. Hombert and C. Préaux, *Recherches sur le recensement dans l'Égypte romaine* (*P.L.Bat.* 5) (Leiden 1957); J.D. Thomas 'A Petition to the Prefect of Egypt and Related Imperial Edicts', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 61 (1975), 201–221, on 217–218 discussing the changed concept of *idia* introduced by Septimius Severus: instead of *idia* as a village or part of a *metropolis*, it now consisted of the whole nome; R.S. Bagnall and B.W. Frier, *The Demography of Roman Egypt* (Cambridge University Press 1994), 15–16; A.K. Bowman, 'Egypt from Septimius Severus to the Death of Constantine', *CAH*² 12, 313–326, 318.

someone.[16] The accused is not only behaving badly towards the petitioner, but allegedly also ignored an imperial decree, as is expressed by the petitioner in lines 28–30: "…I make this petition to you and request you not to neglect me, since our lords the invincible (ἀηττήτων) Emperors have issued a general decree that all are to return to their own homelands and are not to live in foreign parts…". The imperial decree and the letter of the prefect in which the imperial decree was forwarded to the nome *strategoi* some two years earlier are quoted before the actual petition begins. Elsewhere in the document the emperors Septimius Severus and Caracalla are also referred to. The references in lines 1–2 and 11 are copied from official sources and, as far as can be made out, do not contain the epithet ἀήττητοι. However, the formula in line 11 has θειότατοι. So, the employment of these adjectives seems deliberately chosen.

The fourth related text is *P.Oxy*. 67 (2001) 4593, another petition, addressed to the prefect of Egypt. The petitioner claims that he had been appointed to perform two liturgies at the same time, which was illegal. To support his claim, he had appended an imperial decision by Septimius Severus and Caracalla, in which they had dealt with a similar case in favour of the petitioner (lines 1–4). After the quotation of this precedent, the petition to the prefect begins. The names of the addressee and petitioner are followed by a sentence in which the imperial orders, relating to the imperial decision against fulfilling two liturgies simultaneously, are referred to. The wording of this phrase strongly resembles that of *SB* 1.4284. The present text reads (lines 6–7): "Our lords the invincible (ἀήττητοι) Emperors Severus and Antoninus, having cast their radiance (like the rising sun) over their own Egypt, in addition to other blessings which they have provided for us…".

Somewhat in line with these documents is *P.Berl.Frisk* 3, a petition from the public farmer Stotoëtis to the prefect of Egypt. In the introductory part some general, rhetorical sounding, remarks are made, that served to evoke the prefect's compassion. In lines 5–6 the petitioner appeals to the prefect's concern for farmers of the public land "of our eternal invincible lord (αἰωνίου ἀηττήτου) Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus". It is conspicuous that the prefect is portrayed as guarantor of

[16] For a discussion of the text of *P.Oxy*. 47 (1980) 3364, and the connection to *SB* 1.4284 and *SB* 12.10884, see Thomas 1975, op. cit. (n. 15), 213, who argues that: "the edict of which the κεφάλαιον is quoted in lines 6–9 is the one known from *SB* 1.4284 and *SB* 12.10884 [= *P.Westminster Coll.* 3]."

good things and exterminator of bad things, like the emperors in the previous documents discussed.[17] Furthermore, the petitioner stresses the contrast between the past and present: "For those who suffered utterly from violence of certain people in the past, and those who have (…) become participants of that laudable good legislation will not be maltreated by the ones who are in power now…".[18] It is difficult to decide in how far reality is reflected. The editor connects hopes and expectations that are expressed in these introductory sentences to the accession of the new prefect of Egypt. But why the accumulation of epithets (eternal, invincible) within the imperial titulature? One explanation, of course, is that this reinforces the petitioner's plea. But where did the scribe get his inspiration from to use this particular form of imperial titulature? It might have sprung from his own mind, or maybe it is as Frisk suggests: "…man bekommt fast den Eindruck von einer Probekarte verschiedener Sentenzen, die dem Stotoëtis von einem rhetorisch geschulten Schreiber zu freier Wahl vorgelegt worden sind."[19] Still another possibility is that the scribe had seen some examples of the epithets elsewhere. There is evidence for the use of ἀήττητος in official documents connected with the orders of Septimius Severus and Caracalla as we have seen in *SB* 12.10884, *SB* 1.4284, *P.Oxy*. 47 (1980) 3364, and *P.Oxy*. 67 (2001) 4593. The epithet αἰώνιος in third-century imperial titulature is unique. However, it is used in other 'imperial contexts', for example in combination with the imperial διαμονή (presence), for instance in *SB* 1.5659 (A.D. 201) or *PSI* 14.1422 (third century). It is very well possible that the scribe of this petition wanted to impress the addressee by means of some rhetorical twist, which becomes clear in the two introductory sentences. The elaborate imperial titulature would perfectly fit in, and this might explain the insertion of the conspicuous epithets ἀήττητος and αἰώνιος.

How can the employment of the epithet ἀήττητος in these texts be explained? In the case of the petitions it can be conjectured that the scribe wanted to add a powerful adjective to make his petition even more persuasive by using strong adjectives emphasizing the military and godlike qualities of the emperors, like ἀήττητοι and θειότατοι. In petitions rhetorical language was frequently used to stress the deplorable

[17] Line 3: "…the whole province is full of good things due to your concern…". Line 6: "…every evil has been eradicated by you".

[18] For an analysis of the rethorical introductory sentences to petitions, see H.J. Frisk, *Bankakten aus dem Faijûm* (Milano 1975²), 81–91.

[19] Frisk 1975, op. cit. (n. 18), 83.

situation of the petitioner, in strong contrast with the powerful position of the addressee. This way of depicting the situation of the petitioner was expected to contribute to appeal to the feeling of compassion of the addressee and was intended to persuade him to offer help. However, the use of the adjective is not confined to petitions only, but occurs in other contexts too, as will be discussed next. This suggests that, firstly, persuasion and arousing pity are not sufficient to explain the epithet's employment, and, secondly, that there was some familiarity with the epithet. The question, then, is where this familiarity would come from. This question will be dealt with below. Let us first briefly consider the other documents in which the epithet is used.

In four documents, the epithet is connected to the imperial τύχη (Lat. *genius*).[20] *P.Alex.Giss.* 3 is a request to have fluteplayers and dancers sent to Soknopaiou Nesos, to chear up a feast during which offerings are made on behalf of the divine fortune (θείας τύχης) of "our lords the invincible (ἀηττήτων) Emperors Severus and Antoninus…" and the rest of the imperial family (lines 6–12).

SB 14.11935 contains a letter of the prefect of Egypt to some *strategoi* about his annual inspection tour of the province. In line 2 of the badly preserved papyrus the word τύχης is followed by 'our lords', after which the epithet ἀήττητοι is restored.[21] The context of the employment of the epithet is official, since we are dealing with correspondence between higher administrators.

P.Turner 34 is a copy of a petition of an Alexandrian citizen named Aurelius Apollonios alias Sarapion, to the acting *epistrategos* of the Thebaid. Apollonios complains about his stepmother who illegally has taken possession of the property he had inherited from his deceased father. The petition ends with the request that action is undertaken, so that "I may be able to render eternal gratitude (for the benefactions bestowed) by the *genius* (τύχη) of our undefeated (ἀήττητος) lord and emperor Antoninus" (l. 22). In lines 4 and 21 an imperial decree, prefixed to the petition, is mentioned. It could be that the petitioner was inspired to use the imperial titulature in line 22, on the basis of the original phrasing of that imperial decree. However, again this is

[20] *P.Alex.Giss.* 3; *SB* 14.11935; *P.Turner* 34; *PSI* 12.1261.

[21] Only the letter α has been preserved on the papyrus and even this is badly readible. The editors base their restoration on Thomas 1975, op. cit. (n. 15). A better argument for the restoration is the parallel in *P.Alex.Giss.* 3, in which also the word τύχη occurs in connection to the emperors.

speculation at most, and even if this was the case, the question is who was responsible for the phrasing of the decree. Probably this can be attributed to the provincial authorities, so the prefect of Egypt.

PSI 12.1261 is a private letter, in which the author expresses his joy about the news he heard that the addressee is well, and to this he adds "thank the gods and the *genius* (τύχη) of our lord and invincible (ἀήττητος) emperor (line 8)." This document shows that also in private sphere the word ἀήττητος was used for references to the emperor, and attests the importance and reality of the imperial *genius* for some inhabitants of Egypt. Why the author of this text uses the epithet can only be guessed at. Perhaps he copied it from official references to the emperor that were known to him.

Apart from the documents discussed so far, the epithet is also encountered in a few other documents. *P.Oxy*. 47 (1980) 3340 is a fragmentary document containing senatorial proceedings. In lines 6–7 "…the invincible (ἀηττήτους) emperors…" Severus and Antoninus *cum suis* are referred to in the accusative.[22] Maybe the senate voted some kind of honour to them. Although the precise context of these names and titles remains unclear, it is not a dating or oath formula. The insertion of the honorific epithet may, therefore, be interpreted as an act of awe for the emperors by the scribe of the document.

P.Gen. 1.1 is a letter in which Aurelius Theokritos strongly advices the *strategoi* of the Arsinoite nome to heed a certain Titanianos, about whom "everyone knows that he is honoured by our lord the invincible (ἀηττήτου) emperor Caracalla (lines 5–6)."[23] Probably Titanianos had some land and/or possessions in the Arsinoite nome. These were apparently harassed by people, and judging from the contents of the letters, these persons were either the *strategoi* themselves, or persons under their control, perhaps village administrators or liturgists. Since in this case someone of high status is the victim, a warning is given

[22] Another interesting feature of this document is that the names and titles of Plautilla, Plautianus and Geta have been erased as a result of the condemnation of their memories. Therefore, it must have been read again after A.D. 212.

[23] Cf. A. Łukaszewicz, 'Theocritus the Dancer', *Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Papyrologists, Copenhagen, 23–29 August 1992* (Copenhagen 1994), 566–568, identified Theokritos as an imperial freedman, who was highly favoured by Caracalla. Cf. 567, where Łukaszewicz argued that Theokritos was an important person as becomes clear from the sharp tone of his letter, in which he threatens to punish the *strategoi* if they will not answer his call. For Valerius Titanianus see D.W. Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism and Rural Society in Third Century A.D. Egypt* (Cambridge 1991), 21 and 56–58. For the second edition (with commentary) see *P.Gen*. $1^2$1).

to the *strategoi* to behave well towards Titanianos. It is interesting to notice that Theokritos applied the epithet ἀήττητος to Caracalla, and may reflect Theokritos' dedication to this emperor.

P.Oxy. 51(1984) 3603 preserves a declaration under oath of Aurelius Anchorimphis that he will act as guarantor that a certain Akes will deliver animals for "the visit of our lord the invincible (ἀήττητος) Emperor Antoninus [the visit] which is the answer to the dearest prayer of us all" (lines 11–12). This document is official, since it was sworn to the authorities. The phrasing may be inspired by or copied from the announcement that Caracalla would visit Egypt. The question, then, is who was responsible for issuing that announcement? The initiative would of course be of the emperor and his administration in Rome was responsible for communicating the news to the provinces. The provincial administrators would then be responsible for communicating the imperial messages to the inhabitants of the province.[24] It is possible that the honorific phrasing was chosen at that provincial level.

The documents discussed so far all date to the first decades of the third century. The only later third-century text in which the epithet occurs is *Stud.Pal*. 5.119 (A.D. 266–267). The *verso*, Fragment 2, line 38 preserves the letters ἀήττη, but the context (and part of the papyrus) is lost. Fragment 3 is about immunities to offspring of a family of athletes. The first part of the text refers to the greatgiftedness of the emperor, adding ἀήττητος to his titulature (line 2). In line 1, the *genius* "of our benefactary lord the invincible emperor Gallienus" is mentioned. The sender of the letter is not preserved, but may be the president of the council, since the council is the recipient of the prefectural letter appended in lines 17–24. The middle part, lines 8–16, contains an imperial letter to the prefect. Lines 17–24 preserve the prefectural communication of the decision to the council. He writes, in lines 17–20, that the benificence and thanks of "our invincible (ἀήττητος) master Gallienus" becomes clear from the prefixed imperial letter. The context of the document is official, referring to administrative correspondence and containing an imperial and prefectural communication. However, the word ἀήττητος is used only referring to the emperor, not by the emperor himself when he announces his decision in lines 8–16. The application of the epithet may, therefore, be compared to its employment

[24] C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London 2000), 96–117.

in the imperial titulature of Severus and Caracalla: although the epithet is clearly used in connection to the emperor, it is not used in the imperial titulature itself. Therefore, it seems likely that the source of the epithet is not the emperor himself. But before we turn to the origin of the epithet, let us first recapulate some of the observations pertaining to the epithet ἀήττητος.

An extraordinary epithet

The epithet ἀήττητος was never part of the standard imperial titulature in Egypt, since it occurs in papyrological documents only seldom, mostly in documents dated to the first decade of the third century A.D., and none of the attestations of ἀήττητος occurs in imperial dating or oath formulas, but rather in other kinds of references to the emperor.[25] This suggests that a difference was perceived when use was made of imperial titulature in an indirect reference to the emperor (for example, reference to the emperor as ordering something), as opposed to when his titulature was used for dating purposes. Furthermore, most of the documents in which the epithet occurs are connected to the higher administration in Egypt, i.e. those who were involved in the coming into being of the documents, either as recipients of a document or as the communicating party, belong to the regional or provincial administration. In some cases, the epithet ἀήττητος occurs in petitions, but it is also applied by higher authorities themselves. From this it may be assumed that the language of the relevant documents was considered appropriate. The question arises where this term had its origin.

Is it a coincidence that the epithet ἀήττητος, which because of its meaning undoubtedly has military connotations, is attested most in documents from the reigns of Septimius Severus and Caracalla? I would hardly think so. The use of the epithet ἀήττητος may well be connected to the special concern of these emperors with the soldiers.[26]

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[25] Even in the documents under discussion with more than one reference to the emperor, e.g. with a date formula and another reference to the emperor, the epithet does not occur in the date or oath formula. See, for example, *SB* 1.4284, line 23 for the dating formula using names and titles of Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Geta. If the epithet would have been part of the official titulature, it would certainly have been included in this part, like in lines 6–7.

[26] L. de Blois, 'Emperor and Empire in the Works of Greek-speaking Authors of the Third Century A.D.', *ANRW* 2.34.4, 3391–3443, especially 3415–3417; J.-M. Carrié and A. Rousselle, *L'Empire romain en mutation des Sévères à Constantin* (Paris 1999), 71–80.

Septimius Severus owed his emperorship in the first place to his troops. Furthermore, he granted the troops some provisions improving their circumstances of living.[27] Caracalla, too, was perceived by Dio and Herodian as a soldiers' friend.[28] In one papyrological document dated to the reign of Caracalla, ἀήττητος is directly connected to the troops, within the titulature of the emperor's mother.[29] This document, like almost all others in the table, can be classified as administrative. It would not cause surprise that texts originating in official administration would follow terminology that was used in other official communications.

Although the employment of the epithet in connection to Gallienus is attested in one document only, the circumstances are comparable with those of the texts attesting ἀήττητος for Septimius Severus and Caracalla: the epithet is never used in the dating formula or in the reference to the emperor by himself, but rather seems to reflect some honorific description. What the reason is for the renewed employment of this term can only be guessed at. Perhaps Gallienus' military self-presentation, and alleged imitation of, amongst others, Caracalla, can be brought up, but this is mere speculation.[30]

On the whole, the epithet ἀήττητος seems to have been used very subtly, occurring in documents, but never in the really official parts like the dating formulas or the oath formulas. Could it be the case that the documents, in which the epithet is used, incorporated it because the authors who used the term had copied it from other, official, sources? According to Frei-Stolba, unofficial honorific predicates could be used by different persons or bodies, such as the senate or the imperial administration, and maybe this was the case with the epithet ἀήττητος.[31] But which administrative institution was responsible for the 'invention' of this epithet? If it was the imperial bureau in Rome, the epithet would

[27] Herodian 3.8.4–5.

[28] See L. de Blois, 'Volk und Soldaten bei Cassius Dio', *ANRW* 2.34.3, 2650–2676, especially 2674; Id. 1998, op. cit. (n. 26), 3415–3418.

[29] *BGU* 2.362 (A.D. 215–216), accounts for the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus at Arsinoe. *BGU* 2.362 xi, lines 15–19, preserves an account for the costs of decorating the temple "there being an offering for the acclamation of our mistress Julia Domna, mother of the invincible (ἀηττήτων) soldiers."

[30] For the military representation of Gallienus (especially on coins), and his relationship with the soldiers, see L. de Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* (Leiden 1976), 95–118, 135–138, 173–174. Gallienus copying Caracalla in the issuing of coins, depiction in busts in military dress etc., see *ibidem*, 90–91, 112, 115, 137.

[31] R. Frei-Stolba, 'Inoffizielle Kaisertitulaturen im 1. und 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr.', *Museum Helveticum* 26 (1969), 18–39, especially 20.

probably have been used generally on a large scale outside Egypt. That, however, is not the case.[32]

Given the limited use of the epithet within documentary sources from Egypt, it is likely that the epithet had its origins in the provincial administration, or perhaps at the local level, and not at the imperial level in Rome. The prefect, who would receive messages from the emperor in Rome, was responsible for passing them on to the inhabitants of the province under his authority. Maybe the use of language by him or employees of his bureau can be regarded as a demonstration of loyalty towards the emperor(s), or as a sign that Septimius Severus and Caracalla were perceived as singular emperors, for whom it would be fair to add a distinctive epithet in references to their legislation in Egypt or to their *genius*. Indeed, in some of the relevant documents, a connection with the prefect can be established, such as *SB* 12.10884, *SB* 1.4284, *P.Oxy*. 47 (1980) 3364, and *P.Oxy*. 67 (2001) 4593.[33]

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[32] The epithet is occasionally encountered in inscriptions. From an unknown provenance in Egypt comes a votive inscription, in which the epithet is used in the dating formula. See Peachin 1990, op. cit. (n. 3), 465, no. 163: *IGRR* 4.1305 (A.D. 283), in the titulature of Carus. It also occurs in an inscription from Syria, referring to Vaballathus Athenodorus, see Peachin 1990, op. cit. (n. 3), 405.

[33] Perhaps the following argument can be brought in to support the speculation about the origin of the epithet at the provincial level. In A.D. 200, Maecius Laetus was prefect of Egypt, maybe as a reward for his military effort in the Parthian War in A.D. 198. Little is known of Laetus, but according to A. Birley, *Septimius Severus. The African Emperor* (London 1988), 164, he was a favourite of Caracalla. On the basis of this we can speculate that Laetus was acquainted with Julia Domna, who is known to have supported a literary circle connected to the literary movement of the Second Sophistic. This brings us back to the word ἀήττητος, which does not appear very often in Greek documents and might have had an 'literary' effect, what would be in line with the literary style of the Second Sophistic. The three earliest documents attesting the word date from the prefecture of Laetus. It is tempting to hypothesize that Laetus himself was responsible for the introduction of the epithet ἀήττητος in the imperial titulature of Severus and Caracalla, although of course this cannot be proven on the basis of the evidence. For Maecius Laetus, see O.W. Reinmuth, *The Prefect of Egypt from Augustus to Diocletian*, (Leipzig 1935), 106; A. Stein, *Die Präfekten von Ägypten in römischer Zeit* (Bern 1950), 110–111; G. Bastianini, 'Lista dei Prefetti d'Egitto dal 30 a al 299 p.', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 17 (1975), 262–328, 304; Id., 'Lista dei Prefetti d'Egitto dal 30 a al 299 p. Aggiunte e Correzioni', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 38 (1980), 75–89, 85; *PIR*² (1983), 137, no. 54; Id., 'Il prefetto d'Egitto (30 a.C.–297 d.C.): Addenda', *ANRW* 2.10.1, 503–517, at 512; P. Bureth, 'Le préfet d'Egypte (30 av. J.C.–297 ap. J.C.): Etat présent de la documentation en 1973', *ANRW* 2.10.1, 472–502, at 490; On Julia Domna and her 'circle' of literary men, see Birley 1988, 141, 168; J.J. Flinterman, 'De sofist, de keizerin & de concubine: Philostratus' brief aan Julia Domna', *Lampas* 30 (1997), 74–86, 77–78.

The fact that the epithet occurred in petitions too, may say something about the perception of the inhabitants of Egypt, who apparently held Severus and Caracalla in high esteem. The reason why these emperors so much impressed the inhabitants of Egypt may be connected to their imperial visit to that province. The emperors' military image may have provided the Egyptian scribes with inspiration to use this specific epithet. Whether these scribes made up the epithet themselves, and were imitated by the provincial authorities, or whether it was rather the other way round, cannot be proved, but on the basis of the discussion above I think it is possible that the term originated at the provincial level of administration, from where it was copied by the lower levels and eventually was inserted in petitions to high officials.

Conclusion

In summary, the use of the epithet ἀήττητος started in the third century, is limited to very few emperors, and appears in very specific contexts. The epithet was never part of the standard imperial titulature in Greek papyrus documents from Egypt. However, the concept of imperial 'invincibility' was known, maybe based on the self-presentation of certain emperors, who wanted to present themselves as capable military men. The use of the epithet must be explained by deliberate choices of individuals, whose motives can only be guessed at. The wish to add something to the emperor's standard portrayal, either as expression of loyalty or in a rhetorical description of someone looking for help, was real, and this may account for its employment in the documents discussed. Next, and this is the epithet's contribution to the matter of representation and perception of Roman imperial power in Egypt, familiarity with the concept of the emperor's military capability is reflected by the use of the epithet in third-century papyri. This may be a consequence of the military self-presentation of Severus and Caracalla. If this is accepted, the general conclusion with respect to the use of the epithet ἀήττητος in third-century papyrus texts from Egypt is that it reflects the military legitimation of especially Septimius Severus' and Caracalla's power positions and the recognition thereof in Egypt, which had a predilection for these two emperors.

Emperor(s)	Document	Date and provenance	Contents	ἀήττητος used in
Septimius Severus and Caracalla	*SB* 12. 10884, l. 6	200–1, ?	Letter from a *strategos* to a colleague[34]	Reference to order of the emperors
	P.Oxy. 47(1980) 3340, l. 6	201–2, Oxyrhynchus	Senatorial proceedings	Unclear
	P.Alex.Giss 3 = P. Alex. 6, l. 7	201–2, Soknopaiou Nesos	Request for performers	Imperial '*Genius*'
	SB 1. 4284, l. 6	207, Arsinoite nome	Petition of public farmers to the *strategos*	Reference to order of the emperors
	P.Oxy. 47(1980) 3364, l. 29	209, Oxyrhynchus	Petition to the prefect	Reference to order of the emperors
	SB 14. 11935, l. 2	210, Tebtynis	Letter of prefect to *strategoi*	Imperial '*Genius*'
	P.Oxy. 67(2001) 4593, l. 6	206–211, Oxyrhynchite nome	Petition to the prefect concerning a liturgy	Reference to order of the emperors
Caracalla	*P.Berl.Frisk* 3 = *SB* 5. 7517, l. 5	211–2, Arsinoe	Petition of public farmer to the prefect	land of the emperor
	P.Gen. 1. 1, l. 6	213, Arsinoite nome	Aurelius Theocritus to *strategoi*	Emperor honouring Valerius Titanianos
	P.Oxy. 51(1984) 3603, l. 13	215, Oxyrhynchus	Undertaking on oath	Imperial visit
	P.Turner 34 ii, l. 22	216, Diospolis Parva	Petition to the acting *epistrategos*	Imperial '*Genius*'
	PSI 12. 1261, l. 8	212–7, ?	Private letter	Imperial '*Genius*'
Gallienus	*Stud.Pal*. 5. 119 *verso*, Fr 2, l. 38; Fr 3, l. 2; l. 18 (Fr. 3 = W.Chr. 158)	266–7, Hermopolis	Application for privileges	Reference to imperial goodwill

Table: texts from A.D. 193–284 containing the epithet ἀήττητος in imperial titulature

Nijmegen, October 2006

[34] D.J. Crawford and P.E. Easterling, 'Greek Papyri in Westminster College, Cambridge', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 55 (1969), 188–190.

CRISES AND RITUAL OF ASCENSION TO THE THRONE (FIRST – THIRD CENTURY A.D.)

Patrizia Arena

Behaviours, formulas, and locations that would become the constitutive nucleus of the ritual of ascension to the throne emerged during the first and the second centuries A.D., especially as a result of crises of succession and at critical moments of power vacancies. The ritual arose from such moments of transition and potential crises, determined by the specific historical circumstances, differing tendencies inside the court concerning imperial succession, and contrasts between various social groups as to the election of a new *princeps*. This paper concentrates on one specific aspect of the impact of crises on the Roman Empire: the birth of the 'ritual of accession'. This phenomenon is best understandable in relation to specific functions of courts' rituals in different societies throughout history. The prime function of rituals was to create stability in crises of power; this purpose could be obtained through symbolic gestures and well defined formulas, through orderly interaction between various social groups, controlled by precise regulations on behaviour.[1] Further functions were to create legitimacy and assent, to consolidate the social hierarchy, and to establish relationships of dependence and subordination between the emperor and his subjects.

It thus seems worth analyzing the development of the ritual of ascension to the throne, and the ways in which elements of past traditions were used in this respect from the first to the early third century. Although the expression 'ascension to the throne' may seem improper for this period, I use it for several reasons: (1) it appears in the account of Herodianus about the accession of Pertinax and again when he discusses

[1] On the functions of the ceremonial, cf. E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Tradition', in E.J. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge 1983), 3 ff.; D. Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: the British Monarchy and the "Invention of Tradition", c.1820–1977', in Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, op. cit. (n. 1), 104 ff.; D. Cannadine and S. Price (eds.), *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge 1992).

the first senatorial meeting at the accession of Septimius Severus;[2] (2) it corresponds to the development of the imperial *insignia*, especially of the *sella*, and of the court's rituals during the first two centuries of the Empire;[3] (3) the image and the symbolic meaning of the throne change during the second century.[4]

From my research it emerges that the phases and places of emperors' assumptions of power during the early Empire at Rome can be usefully compared to the parts of the fully developed ceremony at Constantinople during the fifth – sixth century A.D.[5] According to the *De Ceremoniis*, four successive phases in the ritual of accession can be distinguished: the choice of the candidate to the throne (ἐκλογή), the proclamation of the chosen emperor by acclamations (ἀναγόρευσις), the coronation (στέψις), and the acclamation of recognition shouted to the new emperor (εὐφημία).[6] The proclamation, coronation and acclamation at first took place in the Κάμπος τοῦ τριβουναλίου at the Hebdomon, but later in the Hippodrome.[7] The Hebdomon was a place that could be clearly identified with the army and formed a symbol of the military victory. During the fifth century it was substituted by the Hippodrome, the new civilian setting for the imperial accession, where the soldiers symbolized the army's participation and joined the crowd in acclaiming the new emperor.[8] It must be observed that the ritual of

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[2] Herodianus, *Ab excessu divi Marci* 2.3.3–4; 3.8.6; I am grateful to Professor W. Eck for the interesting discussion on the use of the expression 'ascension to the throne' and its implicit meaning.

[3] A. Alföldi, *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche* (Darmstadt 1970), 242 ff.; S. Weinstock, 'The image and chair of Germanicus', *Journal of Roman Studies* 47 (1957), 150 ff.; *Idem, Divus Julius* (Oxford 1971), 283 ff.; P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (München 1987), 242 ff.

[4] See also *BMC* II H 18, V; N. Hannestad, *Roman Art and Imperial Policy* (Aarhus 1988), 276 ff.

[5] On the accession during the Tetrarchic period and the Byzantine age and the different elements involved, see S. MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley 1981), 248 ff. On the *De Ceremoniis*, see A. Cameron, 'The Construction of Court Ritual: the Byzantine Book of Ceremonies', in Cannadine and Price 1992, op. cit. (n. 1), 103–136.

[6] On the phases of the ceremony and on the *insignia*, see A. Pertusi, 'Insegne del potere sovrano e delegato a Bisanzio e nei paesi di influenza bizantina', in *Simboli e simbologia nell'Alto Medioevo*, XXIII *Settimana di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* (Spoleto 1976), 481 ff.

[7] *De Ceremoniis* 1.91–93.

[8] MacCormack 1981, op. cit. (n. 5), 363 ff. On the symbolic system and the ideological aspects connected to the Hippodrome, see G. Vespignani, 'Aspetti della relazione tra l'ippodromo e la città, dalla Tarda Antichità al sec. XI", *Rivista di Bizantinistica* 2 (1992), 4–30; *Idem, Simbolismo, magia e sacralità dello spazio circo* (Bologna 1994); *Idem*,

accession during Late Antiquity was still characterized by many different elements. They ranged from a conflict between civilians and soldiers to the shouts of acclamation to the emperor, to the attribution to a superior authority of the election of a new emperor. Yet, these same factors – although confused, fragmentary, and result of crisis – during the Byzantine period formed an elaborate and formalized ceremony.

Three of the essential phases of acquiring power, which would be standardised in the ceremony of the fifth – sixth century, seem already to have developed in Rome from the first to the early third century. The choice and designation of the new emperor corresponds to the ἐκλογή, his proclamation corresponds to the ἀναγόρευσις, and the assent through acclamations by soldiers, senate, and people to legitimate the emperor's rule corresponds to the εὐφημία. Furthermore, by the first century in Rome, specific sites within the urban space emerged where aforesaid phases of the emperors' assumption of power took place: *gradus Palatii* or *area Palatina, castrum, curia*. They can be compared to corresponding sites of the Byzantine ceremony through their peculiar features and symbolic values.

This paper concentrates on three peculiar aspects of the ritual of accession. First, the role of the acclamation as *Imperator* and of the formulaic acclamations. Second, the relations between acclamations, places, and social groups taking part in the ritual of assumption of power, and finally the real and symbolic significance of the places in the ritual procedure.

As already argued by W. Ensslin long ago, the ceremony of ascension to the throne seems to have been standardised by the end of the third century and was characterized by acclamations chanted in unison by the senate in the *curia*.[9] Although only few examples of these acclamations survive in our sources for the early Empire, it is a reasonable assumption that the first and the beginning of the second century A.D. were crucial for the origin and development of the ritual of accession. At first, the praetorians used the acclamation as *Imperator* for their choice of the new emperor and his proclamation. They thus transformed the acclamation into a new political (and ritual) behaviour, constitutive of the emperor's assumption of power. The praetorians, after all,

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Il circo di Costantinopoli nuova Roma (Spoleto 2001); *Idem*, 'Il cerimoniale imperiale nel circo (sec. IV–VI)', *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi, Ser. 2°*, 4 (2002), 13–37.

[9] W. Ensslin, 'The end of the Principate', in *CAH* 12 (Cambridge 1939), 656 ff.

used the traditional form by which soldiers had recognized the *virtus* of a *triumphator* in the triumph ceremonies of the Republican age in a new context. For this development, the first century seems to have been the crucial period. The soldiers' behaviour, in turn, undoubtedly influenced the form in which other social groups participated in the emperor's assumption of power, displayed their approval to the emperor and legitimized his rule.[10] By the early Principate the praetorians, the senators, and the people proclaimed and legitimized a new emperor by acclamations in an increasingly standardized imperial ritual. The acclamations progressively shaped a ritual by which the dangerous moments of power vacancies could be bridged whilst at the same time the new relationships between emperor and subjects were defined. They also ensured stability in the ritual of accession, much like their function in the Byzantine age.

From ancient sources about the elections of Claudius and of Nero it follows that the various social groups played an important role in behaviours and actions, which in the future would become formalised ritual acts. Thus, claudius was driven by force out of his house, ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας, inside the Palace and was taken ἐν εὐρυχωρίᾳ τοῦ Παλατίου (*area Palatina*) by Gratus and other praetorians, who decided to make him emperor. There, he was proclaimed emperor through praetorian acclamation for the first time. After they had proceeded towards the *castrum,* εἰς τὸ στρατόπεδον, he was acclaimed a second time.[11] Hence, the praetorian guard removed the acclamation as *Imperator* from the battlefield (and military victory), using it instead as a ritualistic way to indicate the proclamation of a new *princeps.*[12] In the *Palatium* and the *castrum*, they bestowed to Claudius the title of *Imperator*, explicitly supporting the monarchical shape of government. They did so according to the wishes of *amici* and *familia*, whereas the senate is said to have debated about a potential restoration of the Republic in the *curia*.[13] At

[10] On the senate's behaviour see C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2000), 202 f. Cf. also E. Flaig., *Den Kaiser herausfordern. Die Usurpation im Römischen Reich* (Frankfurt am Main and New York 1992).

[11] Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* 162; 216–217; 223; 226. Suetonius, *Claudius* 10. On the terms referring to the acclamations, particularly on *salutare*, see C. Roueché, 'Acclamations in the Later Roman Empire: new evidence from Aphrodisias', *Journal of Roman Studies* 74 (1984), 181 f.

[12] On the concepts of 'designation' and 'investiture' of the emperor, see B. Parsi, *Désignation et investiture de l'empereur romain (Iᵉʳ–IIᵉ siècles après J.C.)* (Paris 1963), 145 ff.

[13] For the observations on the role of the various groups, see M. Pani, *La corte dei Cesari* (Roma e Bari 2003), 49.

the accession of Nero, the praetorian guard, again according to the wishes of the *aula*, designated Nero as the new *princeps*, acclaiming him in the *Palatium* (*proque Palatii gradibus imperator consalutatus*) and subsequently in the *castrum*; the senate formalized the investiture in the *curia*.[14]

The succession 'crisis' was progressively resolved in *Palatium*, *castrum* and *curia*; the emperors' assumption of power always took place in these sites, always involving the same groups, whose acclamations were necessary to assure his accession legitimacy. The military element is predominant, as it was to be at Constantinople in a later period. There is no evidence as to senatorial acclamations to the emperor in this period.

The accession of Pertinax was characterized by the same phases, involving the same social groups and the same locations. According to Herodianus, he was first proclaimed emperor through acclamation in the στρατόπεδον by the crowd and afterwards by the soldiers. He was then escorted ἐς τὴν βασίλειον αὐλὴν, where he spent the night. The next day he went ἐπὶ τὸ συνέδριον, where he was proclaimed emperor by the senate, εὐφήμησαν Σεβαστόν τε καὶ βασιλέα προσηγόρευσαν.[15] His 'election' and proclamation happened first in the *castrum* and then in the *Palatium*.

Considering the wording of the acclamation chanted during the accession, it seems to have become increasingly elaborate and formalized. This makes it highly probable that the simple acclamation as *Imperator* performed by the praetorian guard during the first century gave rise to a new dimension for the ritual of accession. Already by the end of the first century, the formulaic acclamations developed from titles and brief formulas to an extended series of longer phrases, referring to the themes of contemporary imperial ideology.[16]

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[14] Tacitus, *Annales* 12.68–69. Suetonius, *Nero* 8. On the role of the *aula*, of *Agrippina* and of the senate, see Pani 2003, op. cit. (n. 12), 52 ff. Cf. also A. Winterling, *Aula Caesaris. Studien zur Institutionalisierung des römischen Kaiserhofes in der Zeit von Augustus bis Commodus (31 v. Chr. – 192 n. Chr.)* (München 1999).

[15] Herodianus, *Ab excessu divi Marci* 2.4–5; 2.9–10; 2.3.1. Dio Cassius 73.1–5. *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Pertinax* 4. Reading the sources, there are clear differences between Dio, Herodianus and the *Historia Augusta* about the presence of the people in the *castrum*. Herodianus emphasizes the presence of the crowd to point out the role of the people in the proclamation.

[16] On the ideology, see M. Mazza, *Le maschere del potere: cultura e politica nella tarda antichità* (Napoli 1986), 56 ff.; P. Desideri, *Dione di Prusa. Un intellettuale greco nell'impero romano* (Firenze 1978), 291 ff. Cf. also M.-H. Quet, 'Rhétorique, culture et politique: Le fonctionemment du discours idéologique chez Dione de Pruse et dans les Moralia de Plutarque', *Dialogues d'histoire ancienne* 4 (1978), 51–117; Ead., 'À l'imitation de

This change emerges from the literary sources discussing the investiture of Trajan in the *curia* and the proclamation of Pertinax. This is the second phase in the development of the ritual; the senate, too, chanted acclamation formulas to the emperor.[17] The acclamation as *Imperator* and the other acclamation formulas used on the occasion of the accession and in various imperial ceremonies have been generally treated separately by the scholars, whereas they are characterized by a political, ideological, and ceremonial interdependence. That aspect should be emphasized.

The importance attributed by Pliny to acclamations by the senate at the accession of Trajan, indicates that they were recognized as ritualistic, especially at the accession: *acclamationes quidam nostrae parietibus curiae claudebantur (…) Has vero et in vulgus exire et posteris prodi cum ex utilitate tum ex dignitate publica fuit.*[18] Furthermore, the acclamation formulas included not only the titles *Imperator* and *Augustus*, but also longer formulas as "*O te felicem!*", "*O nos felices!*", "*Crede nobis, crede tibi!*". The development of the phrases with which the emperor was acclaimed at his accession seems clear. Regarding the accession of Pertinax, both Dio Cassius and Herodianus show that the acclamations were used by the people, the soldiers, and the senate for choosing the new emperor, proclaiming him, and for the manifestation of approval or of disapproval. At the same time, the formulaic acclamations were not monolithic, since they could also be used in negative terms, as happened after Commodus' death.[19]

At the beginning of the third century, the acclamation phrases became a kind of hymn chanted in unison by the senate, based on the recitation of the imperial titles, such as *Imperator* and *Augustus*, and finally wishing the emperor a long reign, good health, and divine favour.[20] The acclama-

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Zeus, Antonin le Pieux, garant de l'ordre mondial et de la concorde sociale, d'aprés la témoignage d'Aelius Aristide', in M. Molin (ed.), *Images et représentation du pouvoir et de l'ordre social dans l'Antiquité, Actes du colloque, Angers, 28–29 mai 1999* (Paris 2001), 199–209.

[17] Cf. also S. Benoist, *Rome, le prince et la Cité. Pouvoir impérial et cérémonies publiques (1er siècle av.–début du IVe siècle apr. J.-C.)* (Paris 2005) for Trajan's reign as a shift in imperial ceremonies.

[18] Plinius, *Panegyricus* 74.1–4; 75.2–5.

[19] Dio Cassius, *Historia Romana* 78.2.1. *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Pertinax*, 4.5. Cf. O. Hekster, *Commodus. An Emperor at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam 2002), 161. On the negative acclamation formulas and their value, see G.S. Aldrete, *Gestures and Acclamations in Ancient Rome* (Baltimore 1999), 132 f.

[20] Ensslin 1939, op. cit. (n. 9), 668; R.J.A. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton 1984), 301 f.

tions directed at Septimius Severus (A.D. 205) and Caracalla (A.D. 212) during two senatorial sessions,[21] and those reported by the *Historia Augusta* about the award of the *Antonini nomen* to Severus Alexander,[22] confirm the full formalization of either the acclamations specifically, or of the ritual of accession, the main element of which was the acclamation.[23] The formulas and the concepts expressed already corresponded to those that would later define the ceremony at Constantinople. Still, attention must be paid to the ideological changes which had happened over time.[24]

Under the early Empire, as has already been mentioned, the *gradus Palatii* or *area Palatina*, the *castrum* and *curia* became standard locations

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[21] Dio Cassius 77.6.2: Ἡ δ' αὖ γερουσία ὑμνοῦσά ποτε αὐτὸν καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἄντικρυς ἐξεβόησεν, ὅτι "πάντες πάντα καλῶς ποιοῦσιν, ἐπειδὴ σὺ καλῶς ἄρχεις"; 78. 5. 1: Ἐφ' ᾗ δὴ ἐπαινούμενος ὑπὸ τῶν προσεστηκότων ἔφη "ἐμὲ μήθ' Ἡρακλέα μήτ' ἄλλον θεόν τινα ἐπικαλεῖτε".

[22] *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Severus Alexander* 6.3: *Auguste innocens, di te servent. Alexander imperator, di te servent. Di te nobis dederunt, di te conservent*; 10.8: *Caesar noster, Augustus noster, imperator noster, di te servent. Vincas, valeas, multis annis imperes*.

[23] The acclamation formula used by the senate for Septimius Severus reflected the idea of the public function of the *princeps*; on the development of this aspect of the ideology from the Tiberian age, see M. Pani, *Potere e valori a Roma fra Augusto e Traiano* (Bari 1993), 68 ff. The acclamation formulas reported in the *Vita Alexandri* correspond to those by the *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* for Caracalla and Helagabalus. They expressed the idea of divine origin of the royalty and of the imperial victory; they conteined the invocation of the gods' favour and the reference to the imperial virtues. *CIL* 6.2086 (A.D. 213): *Et adclamaverunt: Fe[li]cissime! Felicissime! Te salvo et victore felicissime! O nos felices, qui te imp(eratorem) videmus! De nostris ann(is) aug(eat) t(ibi) J(uppiter) a(nnos)! Germanice max(ime), D(i) t(e) s(ervent)! Brit(annice) max(ime), D(i) t(e) s(ervent)! Te salvo salvi et securi sumus! (…)*; *CIL* 6.2104 (A.D. 219): *Et adclamaverunt: Feliciss(ime)! Saepe de nostr(is) ann(is) augeat tibi Juppiter annos! (…) Sis pius et felix, M(arce) A(ntonine) imp(erator) C(aesar) Aug(uste)! Di te serv(ent)!* On the *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*, see V.R. Lawson, *The Acta Fratrum Arvalium as a Source for Roman Imperial History 23 B.C. to A.D. 243* (University of Minnesota 1980), 80 ff., and especially J. Scheid, *Recherches archéologiques à la Magliana. Commentarii Fratrvm Arvalivm qvi svpervnt. Les copies épigraphiques des protocols annuels de la confrèrie Arvale (21 av.–304 ap. J.-C.)* (Rome 1998). On the connections between the acclamation formulas, the *formula valetudinis*, and the *Laudes Regiae*, see V. Marotta, 'Liturgia del potere. Documenti di nomina e cerimonie di investitura fra Principato e Tardo Impero Romano', *Ostraka* 8 (1999), 187 ff. For the different interpretations of the historical value of the acclamations reported in the *Vita Alexandri*, see C. Bertrand-Dagenbach, *Alexandre Sévère et l'Histoire Auguste* (Bruxelles 1990), 92 ff. Cf. also K. Hohnn, *Quellenuntersuchungen zu den Viten des Heliogabalus und des Severus Alexander im Corpus der SHA* (Leipzig-Berlin 1911), 158 f.; A. Jardé, *Etude critique sur la vie et le régne de Sévère Alexandre* (Paris 1925), 18; C. Lecrivain, *Etudes sur l'HA* (Paris 1904), 77 f.; J. Burian, 'Die kaiserliche Akklamation in der Spätantike. Ein Beitrag zur Untersuchung der HA', *Eirene* 17 (1980), 17 ff.

[24] *De Ceremoniis* 1.91.9–13: Λέων αὔγουστε, σὺ νικᾷς, σὺ εὐσεβὴς, σὺ σεβαστός · ὁ Θεός σε ἔδοκεν, ὁ Θεός σε φυλάξει · πολλοὺς χρόνους Λέων βασιλεύσει; 1.92.12–14: Ἀναστάσιε αὔγουστε, τούμβηκας · εὐσεβῆ βασιλέα ὁ Θεός φυλάξει · ὁ Θεός σε ἔδοκεν, ὁ Θεός σε φυλάξει.

within the ritual of accession. Corresponding sites to these locations, with connections to specific social groups and with specific ideological values, can be found in the Byzantine ceremony.

The new *princeps* was first acclaimed by the praetorian guard on the *gradus Palatii* or in the nearby *area Palatina*. These were particular places of contact between emperor and praetorians, and formed the location of a ritual dialogue. The people were sometimes also represented, through a crowd accompanying the praetorian guard. Such popular acclamations could balance senatorial disapproval. This recognition by the people, shown through their acclamations, remained indispensable in the Byzantine ceremony. The role played by the *gradus Palatii* and *area Palatina* may be inferred from the texts on the accessions of Claudius and Nero mentioned above, and from Dio Cassius' account on the role Plotina took at the accession of her husband. She spoke to the crowd convened on the *gradus Palatii* before entering the palace.[25] The importance of the *gradus Palatii* and of the *area Palatina* emerges in moments of crisis. They took the place of traditional locations which were habitually involved in the ritualization of political life, *vestibulum* and *aula*, as demonstrated by M. Royo and Y. Perrin.[26] The *gradus Palatii* and the *area Palatina* were, in fact, inside the *Palatium* and marked the limit between the *domus* of the emperor and the more public part of the palace. They were characterized by *fores* and therefore guarded by the praetorians.[27] Consequently, the *gradus Palatii* had a two-sided peculiarity. They were 'open space' because of their vicinity to and connection with the *area Palatina*, but simultaneously formed 'closed space' because admittance was controlled by the praetorians. On the occasion of an emperor's assumption of power, therefore, it was a perfect location for the new ruler to be elected and recognised through acclamations by both the praetorian guard and the crowd. The corresponding Byzantine location would be the palace of *Daphné* at Constantinople,

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[25] Dio Cassius 78.5.5.

[26] M. Royo, *Domus imperatoriae: topographie, formation et imaginaire des palais imperiaux du Palatin (IIe siècle av. J.-C.–Ier siècle ap. J.-C.)* (Rome 1999), 65 and 294 ff.; Y. Perrin, 'Aux marches du palais: les accès au Palatium de 54 à 70', in L. de Blois et al. (eds.), *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power.* Impact of Empire 3 (Amsterdam 2003), 362 ff.

[27] On localizing the *gradus Palatii* near the *domus Augusti* at the accession of Claudius and of Nero, see Royo 1999, op. cit. (n. 25), 294 ff. For the tables on localizing the *gradus Palatii* near the *domus Claudii*, see Perrin 2003, op. cit. (n. 26) 364 f.

whilst the *area Palatina* can be compared with the portico in front of the Triclinium.

In the second phase of the ritual, the praetorian guard acclaimed the new *princeps* in the *castrum*. Ideologically, this location corresponds to the Κάμπος of the later ceremony, which was later substituted by the Hippodrome, where the military character of the ceremony remained essential, as stated above.

In the third phase, senators either acclaimed the emperor in the *curia* on the Forum, invoking Republican traditions, or inside the *Palatium* in the *bibliotheca Latina*, as became usual from the Augustan age onwards.[28] The latter location could, I think, be considered as an expression of the definitive identification of the imperial palace with the imperial power. In fact, the *Palatium* symbolized the values of the Principate and became one of the imperial *insignia*.

In conclusion, during the first and the second centuries, crises caused by power vacancies in combination with the differences between *nobilitas, amici, familia*, and the praetorian guard as to imperial succession, determined the development of the ritual of accession. I would argue that in the early first century the phases, places, and modes of behaviour were not yet shaped into a defined and recognizable ritual, and that the different social groups did not knowingly follow a ritual procedure at the accession of a new emperor. I am, however, inclined to think that by the second century these very phases and modes of behaviours became formalised and were thus transformed into ritual acts. The emperor's assumption of power progressively became an elaborate and formalized ritual, which in the Byzantine age was actually codified in a fully developed ceremony, which was also of religious nature. Tradition was slowly formed through a process of ritualization and formalization, characterized by a constant reference to the past. Ancient materials, gestures, modes of behaviour and formulas were used for developing 'new' ceremonies characterized by new purposes. After all, the main factor in the development of rituals is the connection with the past in order to control crises, and provide legitimacy and continuity.[29] This happened with regard to the ascension to the throne. The use of acclamations

[28] Talbert 1984, op. cit. (n. 20), 117 f.; F. Hurlet, 'Les Sénateurs dans l'entourage d'Auguste et de Tibère. Un complement à plusieurs syntheses récentes sur la cour impériale', *Revue de Philologie* 74 (2000), 123 ff.

[29] Hobsbawm 1983, op. cit. (n. 1), 3 ff.

was retrieved from preceding traditions, and was provided with a new symbolic meaning. Much later, in the Byzantine age, the earlier sites and phases in which the various social groups acted, were unified in a coherent ceremony, and reused with a different meaning.

Naples, September 2006

L'AFFRONTEMENT IDEOLOGIQUE ENTRE GALLIEN ET POSTUME: L'EXEMPLE DES BUSTES CASQUES ET DES BUSTES À ATTRIBUTS HERCULEENS

Claire Grandvallet

La lutte entre les empereurs Gallien et Postume s'est traduite non seulement par des actions militaires, mais aussi par une guerre idéologique où l'image du prince prend une place essentielle. Tentant de mettre en place les axes de définition d'un pouvoir impérial fragilisé, ils donnent une inflexion particulière à l'image du prince. S'ils affirment tous deux la fonction militaire de l'empereur, l'Auguste et le pouvoir impérial apparaissent sacralisés. Chacun doit légitimer son pouvoir vis-à-vis des populations civiles et surtout des armées dont ils dépendent pour assurer la protection de l'empire.

Plusieurs éléments du monnayage de Gallien et de Postume s'inscrivent dans les traditions iconographiques antérieures, mais certaines spécificités montreraient que chacun a emprunté des types et des thèmes monétaires à l'autre. Postume semble avoir surveillé de près le monnayage de son rival. Les monnaies milanaises au nom de Gallien sont connues dans l'Empire des Gaules quelques mois après leur émission. Il faut compter environ un an pour celles de l'atelier central romain.[1] La reprise de thématiques apparaît particulièrement dans l'emploi du casque et des attributs herculéens sur les bustes des droits.

Les bustes casqués

Il est difficile de déterminer qui, de Gallien ou de Postume, a été le premier figuré avec un casque. Pour les deux empereurs, cet attribut est utilisé dès le début du règne: dès la fin 260–261 par Gallien, suivi de peu par Postume, sans doute à l'automne 261. Les casques peuvent être

[1] Je remercie M.D. Hollard pour son aide et les renseignements qu'il m'a communiqués à ce sujet.

de type corinthien ou attique. Gallien porte presque toujours le premier, le casque attique n'apparaît que rarement dans son monnayage.[2] Postume utilise d'abord dans les derniers mois de 261,[3] le casque attique.[4] Ensuite, dès 262, ses effigies casquées montrent également un casque corinthien.[5]

Pour Gallien seuls trois ateliers ont utilisé le buste avec un casque corinthien. Il apparaît dans l'atelier de Milan sur les émissions de billon de la série dite des «légions» en 262/263.[6] Gallien emploie un buste à gauche casqué radié, drapé, cuirassé avec une lance pointée vers l'avant et un bouclier.[7] Ce type est également utilisé sur des multiples d'or et des antoniens. Pour J.-M. Doyen, les *scalptores* milanais seraient responsables de sa création.[8] Le buste avec casque est plus rare dans la capitale.[9] A Rome en 261, Gallien emploie sur des *aurei* le buste à droite casqué, cuirassé.[10] Le type de buste casqué, cuirassé, tenant une lance en avant de la main droite et un bouclier, apparaît aussi sur des multiples d'or et des antoniniens de l'émission romaine suivante.[11] Sur les antoniniens, le casque peut être radié.[12] Lors des décennales en 262, le droit des monnaies de l'atelier central peut montrer l'empereur en buste à gauche, casqué, cuirassé tenant une haste et un bouclier.[13] La crise des années 259–261 se termine par l'affirmation d'un destin providentiel pour Gallien qui a échappé à l'effondrement de la dynastie.

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[2] P. Bastien, *Le buste monétaire des empereurs romains* (Wetteren 1992–1994), pl. 101, 3.

[3] P. Bastien, *Le monnayage de bronze de Postume* (Wetteren 1967), pl. XXIV–XXV; no. 125a–127b, pl. XXVII; B. Schulte, *Die Goldprägung der gallischen Kaiser von Postumus bis Tetricus* (Aarau 1983), nos. 9–11 pl. 1; nos. 19–20 pl. 2.

[4] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 110, 2.

[5] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 108, 8.

[6] Le classement suivi ici est celui de J.-M. Doyen dans sa thèse sur l'atelier de Milan: J.M. Doyen, *L'atelier de Milan (258–268): Recherches sur la chronologie et la politique monétaire des empereurs Valérien et Gallien* (Thèse de doctorat, Louvain-la-Neuve 1989, exemplaires dactylographiés). La série des légions est datée par lui de 261/262 pour la 4e série phase B, et de 262–première moitié de 263 pour les différentes phases de la 5e série.

[7] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 100, 2 = *RIC* 5.1 Gallienus no. 341.

[8] Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome II, 192–195.

[9] A. Alföldi, *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3 Jahrhunderts nach Christus* (Darmstadt 1967), en illustre 3 exemplaires: pl. 12 nos. 16–17; pl. 13 no. 1. Le type est absent de la plupart des grands trésors Cunetio, Gibraltar, Normanby.

[10] R. Göbl, *Moneta imperii Romani* (36, 43, 44): *Die Münzprägung der Kaiser Valerianus I/ Gallienus/Saloninus (253–268), Regalianus (260) und Macrianus/Quietus (260/262)* (Wien 2000), no. 449; 450.

[11] Multiples d'or: Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 423b; antoniniens: Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), nos. 358, 348, 366, 375.

[12] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), nos. 364q, 368q.

[13] Alföldi 1967, op. cit. (n. 9), pl. 12, 14–15.

Lorsqu'il utilise pour la première fois cet attribut, les revers l'associent à la célébration de plusieurs unités militaires à Milan mais aussi à la vertu de l'auguste et la paix qu'il a pu établir. La vertu de l'empereur est illustrée de façon significative soit par l'empereur à cheval,[14] soit par Hercule.[15] Les revers évoquent aussi le dieu Mars pacificateur ou *Mars propugnator*. A Rome en 261, le port du casque est également associé à la *virtus augusti* avec une représentation de Mars,[16] ou bien, dans l'émission suivante, avec une figuration d'Hercule.[17]

En dehors de ces deux ateliers, seul l'atelier de Siscia utilise les bustes casqués pour les monnaies de Gallien. Lors de la première phase en 263, des antoniniens montrent au droit des bustes casqués, cuirassés ou radiés et casqués avec pour revers la célébration de la *providentia augusti*.[18] Les bustes laurés, casqués drapés, cuirassés sont utilisés par Gallien ensuite à Rome, lors de la 15e émission, dans la deuxième moitié de 265–266, sur des *aurei*.[19] Sur des antoniniens de la même émission, le buste casqué, radié, drapé, cuirassé montre une lance sur l'épaule droite et un bouclier tenu de la main gauche.[20]

Postume utilise des effigies casquées sans doute à partir de l'automne 261 dans la série dite « des bustes exceptionnels »,[21] donc peu après leur apparition dans le monnayage de Gallien.[22] Les sesterces de l'atelier principal de Gaule en 261 ont au droit un buste casqué, cuirassé avec *paludamentum*.[23] Lors de l'inauguration du 3e consulat du 1er janvier 262, un buste casqué et radié peut être utilisé sur les avers des doubles sesterces.[24] En 262, le buste à gauche casqué, drapé, cuirassé vu de trois quarts, apparaît sur des *aurei*. Si Postume emploie plus souvent que Gallien le casque seul, cet attribut peut également être associé à

[14] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 966.
[15] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 963.
[16] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 375.
[17] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 423b.
[18] A. Alföldi, Siscia, « Vorarbeiten zu einem Corpus der in Siscia geprägten Römermünzen, I: Die Prägungen des Gallienus », *Numismatikai Közlöny* 1928–1929, (Budapest, 1931), no. 84a, p. 42, pl.V; Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), nos. 1399 ii et 1399 ll.
[19] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 664p.
[20] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), 586q.
[21] La fin de la frappe des sesterces est intervenue au plus tôt vers la fin 261. Cf. D. Hollard, « Le monnayage de bronze de Postume frappé en 262 », *Cahiers Numismatiques* 130 (1996), 7–11.
[22] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), 201–204; Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome 2, 509.
[23] Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), nos. 108 à 111.
[24] Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), nos. 125 à 127.

la lance et au bouclier. Sur le droit de doubles sesterces émis en 261, un buste à gauche casqué, cuirassé vu de trois quarts en avant avec un bouclier et une lance sur l'épaule est figuré.[25] On peut également rappeler l'existence d'une monnaie surfrappée sur un sesterce, copiée d'après une monnaie officielle aujourd'hui disparue, où l'empereur apparaît en buste à gauche, coiffé d'un casque attique, drapé et cuirassé vu de trois quarts en arrière, orné d'un *balteus,* tenant une haste de la main droite et un bouclier de la main gauche.[26] Un autre faux coulé montre à l'avers le buste impérial à droite, casqué, cuirassé.[27] Les thématiques développées par Postume sur les revers sont assez proches de celles de Gallien dès 261 sur les différentes dénominations monétaires. On retrouve l'évocation de la fidélité de l'armée, mais Postume insiste sur la victoire de l'auguste.[28] Sur les doubles sesterces de 261, les revers reprennent la titulature et la représentation de l'empereur, l'Hercule *deusoniensis*, et la Victoire de l'Auguste.[29] Lors de l'inauguration du 3e consulat du 1er janvier 262 de Postume, les revers associés au buste casqué reprennent ce type de légende.[30]

Postume répond à la célébration des décennales de Gallien à Rome de 262 par les quinquennales en 264 en avançant de quelques mois sa commémoration. Elle devait être célébrée vers la mi-264, mais Postume aligne cet anniversaire sur sa 5e puissance tribunicienne prise le 10 décembre 263.[31] A l'occasion de ses quinquennales, Postume formule des *vota decennalia suscepta*,[32] ce qui permet de relier cet événement aux

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[25] Dans son ouvrage sur les *Bustes monétaires*, 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), 206 et 563, P. Bastien les décrit comme des bustes à gauche, cuirassé avec un bouclier sur l'épaule gauche et levant la main droite. La lance peut avoir été effacée par l'usure sur certains exemplaires (notamment Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), no. 112). L'examen des planches nous semble plutôt montrer une lance, non une main levée.

[26] D. Hollard, P. Gendre et J.-P. Roussel, «Un buste casqué inédit de Postume sur un double sesterce d'imitation», *Bulletin de la Société Française de Numismatique* 5 (2001), 65–68.

[27] J.-P. Garnier et M. Prieur, «Antoninien de Postume: un faux antique d'un type non retrouvé», *Bulletin de la Société Française de Numismatique* 46 (1991), 181–182.

[28] Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), nos. 109 à 111.

[29] Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), no. 114, no. 112.

[30] Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), nos. 125 à 127.

[31] Des monnaies (Schulte 1983, op. cit. (n. 3), nos. 62–71; no. 72 et G. Elmer, ‚Die Münzprägung der gallischen Kaiser in Köln, Trier, und Mailand', *Bonner Jahrbücher* 146 (1941), 1–106, nos. 374–375 et nos. 362 à 364) portant la titulature consulaire associent la cinquième célébration impériale et la cinquième puissance tribunitienne effective à partir du 10 décembre 263. La conjonction des deux événements montre que Postume a aligné les deux célébrations.

[32] Schulte 1983, op. cit. (n. 3), nos. 79 à 90 et Q9 Q9A.

commémorations célébrées à Rome. Des *aurei* évoquant au revers ces quinquennales, montrent au droit un buste casqué à gauche, vu de trois en avant. Si Postume a d'abord utilisé le casque attique fin 261, dès 262 les effigies casquées sur les *aurei* et les quinaires, de 262 au début 264, représentent un casque corinthien, peut-être en écho au type de casque utilisé par son rival à Rome pour les décennales. L'image du *princeps* casqué est présente dans le monnayage de Postume quand Gallien l'utilise à Milan et à Rome. L'empereur des Gaules utilise au besoin le même type de casque que celui porté par son rival.

Dans l'ensemble du monnayage de Gallien et de Postume, le buste casqué simple est assez rare. Le plus souvent, il est associé à la lance et au bouclier. Les types de portraits monétaires casqués de Gallien sont plus variés que sur les monnaies de Postume. L'image du casque a peut-être pour source le monnayage hellénistique tardif des Indo-Grecs,[33] ou le modèle alexandrin.[34] Le casque porté par les deux augustes peut être lisse ou décoré, avec ou sans une couronne laurée ou radiée. Cette dernière sur les doubles sesterces de Postume constitue une marque de valeur indispensable.[35] Les décors que l'on peut observer sur certains casques de l'empereur des Gaules ont peut-être été gravés d'après des dessins mis officiellement à la disposition des *scalptores*. Ils devaient permettre de distinguer le casque impérial des casques de subalternes.[36] Cependant, il ne peut être réduit à une simple partie de l'armement. Cet attribut renvoie à l'action militaire du prince, de même que la cuirasse et le *paludamentum*, la lance et le bouclier, mais il apparaît aussi comme un des insignes du pouvoir impérial.[37] Le casque semble faire

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[33] Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome II, 509.

[34] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), 202–203.

[35] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), 77, 114, 223; P. Bastien, «Le buste à main levée dans le monnayage romain», *Studi per Laura Breglia, Bolletino di Numismatica* 4 (Rome 1987), 268–269; Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome II, 506.

[36] Sans doute par des éléments décoratifs particuliers cf. Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 4), 219–221 et C. Grandvallet, *L'image du prince dans la numismatique romaine (235–268 après J.-C.),* thèse soutenue en novembre 2003, (exemplaires dactylographiés), volume II, 146–147.

[37] Pour K. Kraft, l'emploi simultané du casque corinthien et du casque attique dans leur monnayage montrerait qu'il fait partie de l'armement, non qu'il est un insigne impérial. Il ne le deviendrait qu'avec l'introduction du casque d'origine orientale par Constantin Ier: cf. K. Kraft, ‚Der Helm des römischen Kaisers', *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur antiken Geldgeschichte und Numismatik*, I (Darmstadt, 1978), 134–144. Pour P. Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), 202, l'utilisation du casque, quel que soit son type, reflèterait l'adoption par les deux empereurs d'une nouvelle marque de souveraineté. Les deux types de casques peuvent être portés en même temps comme dans le monnayage de Postume dans l'atelier principal de Gaule et sur les monnaies de Gallien dans l'atelier

référence, plus qu'à l'action militaire elle-même, aux résultats obtenus par l'empereur, les victoires impériales étant la marque de sa *virtus*. Porté seul, ou associé au bouclier et à la lance, le casque évoquerait en filigrane l'image du dieu Mars. La divinité apparaît comme la référence des actions guerrières de l'empereur dont les succès assurent la paix et la prospérité. Le prince, protégé par les dieux, a fait échec aux forces de destruction, assurant ainsi la permanence de l'Empire. Les règnes de Gallien et de Postume semblent bien jouer sur l'identification de l'empereur à Mars. Cette hypothèse se trouve renforcée par l'usage que les deux Augustes font au même moment de la peau de lion et de la massue d'Hercule sur les bustes des avers.

Les bustes herculéens: la peau de lion de Némée et la massue

Ces attributs ont déjà été utilisés dans le monnayage impérial sous Gordien III.[38] Gallien les reprend sur ses droits dès 261,[39] et Postume à partir de 264 avec des représentations plus variées.

Gallien est figuré sur les droits avec, soit la peau de lion seule, soit la peau de lion et la massue, soit seulement la massue. Au printemps 261, à l'occasion de son entrée triomphale à Rome, l'empereur est représenté au droit d'antoniniens portant une peau de lion de Némée sur la tête et le thorax, les pattes nouées en avant du cou. Or Postume avait dès le début de son monnayage à la mi-260,[40] évoqué la thématique herculéenne sur des revers par la légende HERC DEVSONIENSI et la représentation du dieu.[41] L'année suivante, il y associe l'*Hercules Magusanus* sur des sesterces.[42] Gallien semble alors répondre à l'évocation de cet Hercule local par l'empereur des Gaules. Les revers associés à ces droits

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de Milan, ainsi que dans les ateliers orientaux sur des monnaies locales (cf. Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), no. 114, p. 154, pl. XXV; Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 108, 9).

[38] Pour une étude détaillée de cet aspect, voir Grandvallet 2003, op. cit. (n. 36), volume II, 324–327.

[39] Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome II, 519 et 521; cf. L. de Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* (Leiden 1976), 136 et 149–150; C. Brenot et M. Christol, «Deux antoniniens de la dernière émission de Gallien à Milan», *Bulletin de la Société Française de Numismatique* 26 (1971), 44–46.

[40] Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), nos. 118a, 121a, 124, 131, 146, 182–184, 186.

[41] Schulte 1983, op. cit. (n. 3), no. 37: Hercule est représenté debout de face, la léontè sur le bras, tenant un arc et s'appuyant sur une massue.

[42] Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), nos. 287, 293.

évoquent la *pax augusti* et surtout la victoire de l'empereur ainsi que sa *virtus*.[43] Celle-ci est étroitement liée à Hercule par la représentation au revers d'un arc, d'une massue, de la peau de lion et d'un carquois.[44] La *virtus* de Gallien est ainsi associée à Hercule dont la protection est liée aux origines familiales du *princeps*. Gallien affirme ainsi en partie sa légitimité mise à mal par la défaite de son père.

Pour les décennales de 262 à Rome, le droit de multiples de bronzes montre le buste de Gallien à droite, la tête recouverte de la peau de lion dont les pattes sont nouées autour du cou.[45] Le seul attribut herculéen est ici la peau de lion, comme en 261. Sur un quinaire d'or d'Antioche, à la même période, le buste impérial de l'avers n'a que la massue sur l'épaule droite comme attribut herculéen.[46] Ce droit est associé à la *virtus aug(usti)* avec la représentation de *Virtus* debout à gauche, tenant une haste et s'appuyant sur un bouclier.

Dans le monnayage de Postume, les attributs herculéens à l'avers ne sont utilisés qu'à partir de la mi-264, après les quinquennales. Sur un multiple de bronze, son buste nu est recouvert de la peau de lion, les pattes nouées en avant du cou.[47] Il reprend ici le buste utilisé par Gallien à Rome en 262 sur des multiples. De la même façon, Postume utilise ce type de buste sur des monnaies de prestige.

Plus tardivement, lors de son septième consulat en 266, Gallien continue d'utiliser sur des avers le buste avec la tête recouverte de la léonté, à Milan sur des quinaires d'argent et des antoniniens.[48] Le buste de Gallien à gauche, est radié, avec la massue sur l'épaule droite et la peau du lion entourant le haut du thorax, les pattes nouées sous l'épaule gauche.[49] Ce buste apparaît également en 266–267 sur des *aurei* de Siscia.[50] Il utilise dans ces deux ateliers la figuration de la massue et de la peau de lion, alors qu'à Rome, il réemploie le casque.

Postume n'utilise ces deux attributs que fin 267. Des *aurei* le figurent en buste à gauche, nu, avec une massue sur l'épaule droite et une tête

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[43] F. Morel et M. Amandry, « Le trésor de Missiriac (Morbihan) au musée de Carnac », *Bulletin de la Société Française de Numismatique* 50 (1995), 1078–1079, fig. a et b.

[44] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 102, 6.

[45] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 102, 9; F. Gnecchi, *I Medaglioni Romani*, I (Milan 1912), no. 20, p. 108, pl. 114, 1.

[46] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 112, 12.

[47] Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), no. 378; Bastien, 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 110, 4; Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 23), no. 129, pl. XXVII.

[48] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 710), nos. 1385–1386.

[49] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 99, 3.

[50] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 1433.

de lion sur l'épaule gauche. Un *balteus* sur le thorax à partir de l'épaule droite maintient la peau de lion.[51] L'année suivante, en 268, sur des antoniniens, ce droit est repris par l'empereur mais le buste est radié.[52] Si le buste radié à gauche est semblable à celui des *aurei* avec la même légende au droit, les revers font précisément allusion à Hercule par la légende ou la représentation choisie.[53] La représentation de l'avers est très proche de celle de Gallien, mais on peut noter des différences surtout par la façon dont la peau de lion est figurée sur le thorax.

L'évocation d'Hercule sous cette forme n'est pas novatrice. Cette divinité a joué un rôle important en tant que protecteur de l'empereur dès le règne d'Auguste. Les vertus de ce héros sauveur et immortel sont attribuées au prince régnant, sans que cela implique une réelle identification avec la divinité. Pour Gallien comme pour Postume, ces portraits glorifient l'empereur soldat qui, tel un nouveau Hercule, débarrasse le monde romain des menaces pesant sur l'empire. La *virtus* impériale, comparable à celle du dieu, permet à l'Auguste de rétablir, puis d'assurer l'ordre dans les territoires sur lesquels il règne. Il renvoie ainsi à l'image du « prince idéal », déjà mise en place sous les Antonins et les Sévères.

Ces éléments, associés à ceux montrant l'empereur casqué, montrent que l'on ne peut réduire leur signification à une simple illustration de thématiques anciennes. Les attributs portés par le prince ne sont pas dus à la fantaisie du graveur. Tout en répondant aux éléments énoncés par le rival, la rhétorique iconographique cherche à définir le pouvoir impérial en répondant aux attentes des militaires et des populations dont les Augustes doivent assurer la sauvegarde. Le discours monétaire ne doit pas convaincre dans le cadre d'une argumentation, il affirme les moyens de la politique choisie. L'image du prince renvoie à une représentation symbolique, voulue et sélectionnée par le pouvoir. Les résonnances dans le monnayage de Postume des thématiques utilisées par Gallien, sont un des éléments de l'affrontement idéologique entre les deux empereurs.

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[51] Schulte 1983, op. cit. (n. 3), no. 111, p. 104, pl. 9.
[52] Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 109, 1.
[53] Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), no. 558, no. 560.

L'affrontement idéologique

Par l'emploi du casque et de la peau de lion, l'image joue sur la ressemblance implicite entre la divinité et l'empereur. Ce dernier devient un intermédiaire privilégié entre les hommes et les dieux. L'utilisation de ces bustes à attributs dans le monnayage permet donc au pouvoir impérial d'exprimer des éléments idéologiques, de façon explicite mais aussi implicite. Les règnes de Gallien et de Postume marquent un changement sur les plans politique et religieux apparaissant à des moments spécifiques.

S'il est difficile de déterminer ce qui a conduit Gallien et Postume au début de leur règne à se faire représenter coiffés du casque sur leurs bustes monétaires, son emploi à cette période semble bien renvoyer à l'image de l'empereur en Mars. Précédant Postume dans l'emploi de l'iconographie héracléenne sur les droits, Gallien affirme sa ressemblance avec Hercule au début de son règne seul. La célébration des décennales de Gallien dans l'*Urbs* en 262 est un autre moment important de l'affirmation du pouvoir impérial. Les bustes à attributs sont à nouveau associés à des revers célébrant l'armée[54] et les victoires impériales, en plus des *votis decennalibus*.[55] Pour s'affirmer comme l'empereur légitime face aux usurpateurs, Gallien rappelle les victoires remportées, signe de l'efficience de la *virtus* impériale sur le champ de bataille. Ses succès assurent la paix et la prospérité de l'empire, à l'image d'Auguste qui a pacifié le monde après les guerres civiles, pouvant annoncer le retour d'un nouvel âge d'or.[56] Gallien emploie à ce moment des bustes à tête nue, avec seulement la peau de lion de Némée autour du cou[57] au droit de multiples de bronze émis à Rome. Postume utilise lors des quinquennales des bustes à tête nue et des bustes trois quarts face.[58] Le buste de face est peu utilisé sur les monnaies. Postume en fait l'usage dans des émissions où le *princeps* apparaît avec les attributs de Mars et

[54] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), nos. 753, 532c.

[55] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), nos. 358, 348, 366, 375, 523a.

[56] Cf. Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome II, 393–397; Alföldi 1967, op. cit. (n. 9), 52–54; M. Christol, *L'État romain et la crise de l'Empire sous le règne des empereurs Valérien et Gallien 253–268*, thèse de doctorat (Paris 1981, exemplaires dactylographiés), 621.

[57] Gnecchi 1912, op. cit. (n. 45), III pl. 161, 8; 114, 1; 113, 9.

[58] Schulte 1983, op. cit. (n. 3), no. 96a. Dans ce cas, le problème technique représenté par la gravure d'une couronne laurée sur le buste de face expliquerait l'emploi du buste à tête nue d'après Bastien: cf. Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), 45.

d'Hercule. Les revers associés à ces bustes à tête nue reprennent des thèmes relativement proches de ceux évoqués par Gallien. Les bustes et les revers utilisés lors des quinquennales mettent en valeur l'activité civile du prince,[59] à la fois célébration des vertus impériales dont Postume se veut le dépositaire, et peut-être référence au fondateur du principat par l'emploi du buste à tête nue. En même temps que ses quinquennales, Postume célèbre un triomphe germanique, soulignant la vaillance de son armée, instrument de ses victoires et fondement de son pouvoir.[60] Ses victoires militaires lui ont permis de garantir une continuité et de rétablir la paix. Il peut apparaître ainsi comme le dépositaire des vertus impériales. Le monnayage souligne lors de cet événement les mérites du dirigeant de l'Empire et les bénéfices de son gouvernement. Postume est lié à la promesse du retour de l'abondance. Dans ce cadre, après ses quinquennales, Postume utilise en 264 pour la première fois les attributs herculéens à l'avers d'un multiple de bronze dont le revers a pour légende SAECVLO FRVGIFERO et montre un caducée ailé,[61] évoquant peut-être une des fonctions de l'*Hercules Romanus* qui est de présider à la fécondité des sols.

En 265–266, le monnayage de Gallien marque un nouveau tournant. La 15e émission dite « du 7e consulat » à Rome, où les revers célèbrent le retour de l'empereur,[62] ne montre pas de buste avec les attributs herculéens, mais des bustes avec casque sur des *aurei* et des antoniniens.[63] Les revers célèbrent le retour du prince dans la capitale après son voyage à Athènes où il a été initié aux mystères d'Eleusis. Gallien emploie ensuite la peau de lion et non le casque dans les ateliers de Milan[64] dans l'été 266, puis à Siscia en 267.[65] Dans les deux ateliers, les revers évoquent l'*aeternitas augusti*, ou sa providence. Lorsqu'à Siscia, en 266–267, puis en 267, Gallien utilise des bustes avec les attributs herculéens sur des antoniniens et des *aurei*, l'invasion gothique remet en question les acquis

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[59] *RIC* 5.2 Postumus no. 362; Schulte 1983, op. cit. (n. 3), Q8.

[60] Frappe d'un revers reprenant l'image d'un monceau d'armes associé à la légende VIRTVS EXERCITVS. Cf. D. Hollard, « L'*aureus* de Postume au type *Virtus exercitus* », *Cahiers Numismatiques* 132 (1997), 18.

[61] Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), no. 378; Bastien, 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), pl. 110, 4; Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), no. 129, pl. XXVII.

[62] Pour plus de détails sur cette émission et les revers employés, voir Grandvallet 2003, op. cit. (n. 36), volume II, 125–127.

[63] Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), nos. 664p, 586q.

[64] Quinaire d'argent: Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 1385 f.; antoninien: Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 1365.

[65] *Aurei*: Göbl 2000, op. cit. (n. 10), no. 1433.

et la paix en Illyricum. La crise militaire s'accentue surtout en Orient après la mort d'Odenath. Gallien doit affronter plusieurs adversaires pour empêcher l'éclatement de l'espace romain. L'assimilation de Gallien à Hercule est sans doute liée à la guerre menée contre Postume, seule une victoire pouvant régler leur rivalité.[66]

Lorsque Postume réutilise les bustes herculéens fin 267 sur des *aurei*, l'image du prince tend à le présenter comme un être exceptionnel, protégé par les dieux. Depuis la fin de 265, le buste de Postume peut être accolé à celui d'Hercule sur les droits comme sur les revers. Fin 267, Hercule est célébré comme le *comes augusti*.[67] A la même période, l'effigie de l'empereur, lauré, nu avec un pan de *paludamentum* à droite, est accolée à la tête d'Hercule lauré sur des monnaies dont les revers évoquent Mars, Apollon, Diane et Jupiter comme CONSERVATORES AVG.[68] Le buste de Postume accolé à la tête d'Hercule apparaît aussi à l'avers d'*aurei*. Cette figuration est associée au revers aux bustes accolés de l'empereur lauré, drapé et de Mars casqué sous la légende VIRTVTI AVG.[69] Les victoires remportées sont le retour de la *pietas* impériale à l'égard des dieux. Sa survie est une preuve de légitimité et ses vertus lui permettent de s élever vers le divin. Si Postume est empereur, c'est par la volonté divine qui s'exprime par les victoires remportées. Ces bustes semblent amorcer un changement d'image, de fondement idéologique. Au début de 268, les bustes à gauche de Postume dotés des attributs d'Hercule, avec la dépouille du lion de Némée et la massue, constituent une adaptation d'effigies similaires utilisées pour Gallien sur son billon milanais en 266–267.[70] Son monnayage ne se limite plus aux références à Hercule *Magusanus* et à Hercule *Deusoniensis* mais célèbre aussi l'Hercule romain.[71] En célébrant ainsi la divinité, l'empereur célèbre sa propre réussite. Comme Hercule, il est invaincu et ses succès militaires lui permettent d'assurer l'ordre dans les territoires qui dépendent de lui. Gallien a tenté par deux fois d'éliminer sans succès la sécession

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[66] Christol 1981, op. cit. (n. 56), 624; cf. O. Hekster et E. Manders, ‚Kaiser gegen Kaiser, Bilder der Macht im 3. Jahrhunderts' in K.-P. Johne, T. Gerhardt et U. Hartmann (eds.), *Deleto paene imperio Romano* (Stuttgart 2006), 135–144.

[67] *RIC* 5.2 Postumus no. 261; Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), no. 427.

[68] *RIC* 5.2 Postumus nos. 262–264, 298, 337; Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), nos. 437, 442, 422.

[69] *RIC* 5.2 Postumus no. 283; Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), no. 432.

[70] Hollard, Gendre et Roussel, op. cit. (n. 26), 68; Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome II, 519; cf. De Blois 1976, op. cit. (n. 39), 136 et 149–150.

[71] Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), nos. 558–559.

occidentale. Postume apparaît comme celui qui bénéficie du soutien des dieux, manifestation de sa *felicitas*.[72] Il a donné un accent particulier à cette assimilation en apparaissant sur des droits avec son portrait accolé à celui d'Hercule à partir de 265 sur des *aurei*. Ces thématiques et ces bustes semblent utilisés de façon à répondre à Gallien en affirmant très explicitement la protection d'Hercule sur l'empereur gaulois.

Les influences réciproques dans le monnayage de ces deux empereurs se situent à plusieurs niveaux. Les deux Augustes mettent particulièrement l'accent dans leur guerre idéologique sur les attributs de l'empereur combattant, insignes du pouvoir impérial et illustrations du courage militaire de l'Auguste. Il reste difficile de savoir qui, de Gallien ou de Postume a imité l'autre. Gallien innove avec l'utilisation des bustes casqués, et Postume reprend ensuite cet attribut. Si Postume est le premier à évoquer Hercule sur ces monnaies, Gallien apparaît couvert de la léonté sur les droits. Il est ensuite imité/suivi par Postume. Les deux Augustes ont célébré le demi-dieu dans les revers de leurs monnaies dès 260 et 262. Pour J. de Witte, Gallien se serait calqué sur Postume.[73] Pour L. De Blois, Hercule est particulièrement associé à Gallien dans ses guerres avec l'usurpateur.[74] L'assimilation divine par la représentation des attributs sur les bustes et l'utilisation d'Hercule pour représenter la *virtus augusti* a pu être interprétée comme une propagande particulièrement destinée aux soldats de Gaule et d'Italie du Nord où Hercule est particulièrement vénéré.[75] Gallien a sans doute précédé Postume dans l'utilisation de l'iconographie héracléenne sur les droits, «récupérant» ainsi habilement tous les éléments attachés à la divinité. Postume honore tout au long de son règne Hercule *Deusoniensis* par des frappes de bronze et d'or. L'utilisation des thèmes herculéens par l'empereur des Gaules, la ressemblance physique entre la divinité et l'auguste sur les portraits montrent bien Hercule comme un des protecteurs du prince, très populaire dans l'armée dont est issu

[72] Christol 1981, op. cit. (n. 56), 617: la *felicitas* procède du *consensus* des dieux. A travers l'exaltation de Mercure, le monnayage de Postume insiste sur la *felicitas* du prince. Postume s'écarte d'une interprétation d'Hercule spécifiquement celtique qui fait de ce dieu, non d'Hermès, le *logos*.

[73] J. de Witte, «De quelques empereurs romains qui ont pris les attributs d'Hercule», *Revue de la numismatique françoise* 11 (1845), 217–218.

[74] De Blois 1976, op. cit. (n. 39), 113.

[75] De Blois 1976, op. cit. (n. 39), 134–137, 149–150; Bastien 1992–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), 376–377; Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome II, 229–230.

Postume.[76] Les attributs apparentent l'Auguste régnant aux représentations divines, sans identifier l'homme au dieu. Ils seraient la marque des vertus ou du charisme surhumain lié aux responsabilités impériales : les Augustes agissent comme la divinité dont ils portent les attributs. Les effigies des dieux représentés peuvent être faites à la ressemblance de l'empereur,[77] surtout dans le monnayage de Gallien. Postume semble connaître la nouvelle idéologie que tente de mettre en place son rival. Les bustes avec des attributs spécifiques présentent l'empereur comme un intermédiaire privilégié entre les hommes et les dieux. Les victoires remportées, le soutien de l'armée, permettent le rétablissement de la paix et le retour d'un nouvel âge d'or. La rhétorique iconographique employée sur les monnaies renverrait alors à la sacralisation du pouvoir et de la fonction impériale.[78]

Gallien, confronté à une situation de crise sans précédent, tente de rendre son pouvoir moins dépendant des hommes et des circonstances. Si la *virtus invicta* du prince s'est manifestée dans l'empire, Postume reste un adversaire dont il faut prévenir toute velléité d'expansion par une politique défensive. La tentative réalisée dès le début du règne seul de Gallien, sans doute en 261, n'a pas fourni les résultats espérés. Gallien doit ensuite réorganiser l'Illyricum et les provinces sur la frontière commune avec les Sassanides, Postume doit défendre la frontière du Rhin.[79] L'action militaire de ces deux empereurs et leur capacité à préserver le territoire des invasions justifient leur pouvoir. Gallien s'appuie sur les courants de pensée existant, notamment la philosophie de Plotin, pour montrer qu'il est empereur par le choix des dieux, non par celui des hommes. Le pouvoir impérial apparaît comme sacré car directement lié à la relation particulière existant entre le *princeps* et les divinités.[80]

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[76] Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), 13–19; Doyen 1989, op. cit. (n. 6), tome II, 520; D. Gricourt, « Les premières émissions monétaires de Postume à Trèves », *Trésors Monétaires* 12 (1990), 44 et 48 n. 133.

[77] R. Turcan, « Le culte impérial au IIIe siècle », *ANRW* 16.2, 999, 1038 et 1049.

[78] Les bustes nus à tête nue ne sont pas seulement une allusion aux fonctions civiles de l'empereur. Ils s'inscrivent dans la thématique plus large de la sacralisation de leur pouvoir et de la fonction impériale. Pour plus de détails sur l'emploi de ces types de bustes, voir la thèse de Grandvallet 2003, op. cit. (n. 33), volume II, 31–35; Bastien 1967, op. cit. (n. 3), 62; R. Delbrueck, *Die Münzbildnisse von Maximinus bis Carinus* (Berlin 1940), 27; Bastien, 1922–1994, op. cit. (n. 2), 229.

[79] Christol 1981, op. cit. (n. 56), 65.

[80] Grandvallet 2003, op. cit. (n. 36), volume II, 501–520 et C. Grandvallet, « Le prince et le philosophe: Gallien et la pensée de Plotin », *Cahiers Numismatiques* 152 (2002), 24–47.

De même, Postume se présente en homme inspiré directement par les dieux. Il n'a comme légitimité que sa désignation par l'armée. Il ne peut pas s'appuyer sur une hérédité divine, encore moins sur une désignation par le Sénat. Seule sa capacité à préserver les Gaules de toute menace extérieure justifie sa fonction. Son monnayage dès le début de son règne, met en avant les thèmes de *salus provinciarum*,[81] *restitutor galliarum*,[82] soulignant ainsi les victoires remportées et le salut des provinces. L'empereur est bien protégé par les dieux qui en font leur intermédiaire. Suivant l'exemple de Gallien, il tente de sacraliser son pouvoir. Il s'appuie notamment sur Hercule sous les traits duquel il est figuré,[83] mais fait également référence aux dieux protecteurs de Rome. Choisi par les dieux pour gouverner l'Empire, il devient un intermédiaire indispensable entre la sphère du divin et le monde humain puisqu'il voit et déchiffre les messages obscurs. Postume répond aux attentes des provinciaux et des militaires en rétablissant la paix et la prospérité au sein de l'Empire. L'armée lui a permis de prendre le pouvoir, mais elle n'a fait que concrétiser la volonté des dieux.

Les images monétaires utilisées par Gallien et Postume montrent des résonnances. Ils sont tous deux représentés avec les attributs de Mars et d'Hercule. L'évolution des gestes et des attributs indique le statut particulier du nouveau *rector orbis*.[84] Ce renouveau iconographique se voit surtout dans les deux officines italiennes de Rome et de Milan, et à partir de 262 dans l'atelier de Siscia pour Gallien. L'atelier d'Antioche, malgré une production abondante, semble rester en dehors de ce mouvement alors qu'il avait été à l'origine de nouveaux types de bustes avec attributs à partir de Septime Sévère.[85] Les ateliers de Rome et de Milan semblent réaliser de véritables recherches iconographiques à la demande de l'administration monétaire, et sans doute de l'empereur, pour concrétiser la nouvelle conception du statut de la personne impériale. Un développement contemporain, mais moins riche, s'effectue

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[81] *RIC* 5.2 Postumus nos. 38, 87; Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), no. 123.

[82] *RIC* 5.2 Postumus nos. 82, 157–159, 223; Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), nos. 206a, 202.

[83] Lors de la 5e période fin 263 / début 264 (*RIC* 5.2 Postumus no. 22, Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), no. 325) ainsi que dès la seconde période d'après Elmer 1941, op. cit. (n. 31), nos. 182–183.

[84] *CIL* 11.3089: *rector orbis, dominus terrarum*.

[85] J.M. Doyen, «La création des types iconographiques romains tardifs. A propos d'une émission exceptionnelle frappée à Milan en l'honneur de Gallien», *Mélanges de numismatique offerts à P. Bastien à l'occasion de son 75e anniversaire* (Wetteren 1987), 86 et n. 12.

en Gaule dans l'atelier principal de Postume. Peut-être faut-il y voir l'influence des élites gauloises entourant l'empereur qui se distinguent plus tard dans les *Panégyriques*.[86] L'empereur combattant et victorieux est valorisé, de même que le chef charismatique sachant dispenser des largesses et s'assurer le soutien de l'armée.

Il est difficile de savoir qui de Gallien ou de Postume a précédé l'autre, même si généralement l'innovation vient de Rome avant de se diffuser dans l'empire des Gaules. La liaison est évidente entre les deux règnes et les *procuratores monetae* réagissent immédiatement aux changements de rhétorique iconographique, cautionnant l'idée que pour ces deux princes, les monnaies sont bien un moyen de diffusion du discours impérial. D'autres éléments employés sur les revers monétaires semblent le confirmer. Ils sont l'objet d'une recherche actuellement menée en collaboration avec M.D. Hollard de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

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[86] M.C. L'Huillier, *L'empire des mots. Orateurs gaulois et empereurs romains, 3e et 4e siècles* (Paris et Besançon 1992), 79–90; 258–259; 275–280; 325–360 et 303.

CRISIS IN (LEGAL) WRITING

A CRISIS OF JURISPRUDENCE? THE END OF LEGAL WRITING IN THE CLASSICAL TRADITION

Bernard H. Stolte

In traditional historiography, the 'classical' period of Roman law, when it is judged to have lived its finest hour, is placed between circa 50 B.C. and A.D. 250 at the latest. It is the period in which the clarification and development of legal doctrine evolved through free discussion among *iurisperiti*, who thus contributed to the process on a case-by-case basis and who were not dependent on this activity for a living. That period is contrasted especially with that which followed, when these free discussions did not only appear to have come to an end, but the quality of legal scholarship was also perceived to show signs of decline. In any case the stream of legal writing in the classical tradition, testifying to these discussions, seems to dry up in the first half of the third century. The same historiography has little appreciation for the following centuries: after classical come epi- and postclassical, then vulgar and one shudders to think of the next phase: byzantine.

In this perspective, the history of Roman law is one of rise, flowering, decline and fall. The starting-point is the law of the Twelve Tables, the end Justinian's codification, the latter not so much an event with its own importance in that history, but rather a fortunate occurrence which happens to have preserved the writings of the 'classical' jurists. The 'fall' of Roman law takes place already earlier and the Justinianic revival is seen as something odd, rarely judged on its own terms by legal historians, unless they happen to be byzantinists, who take it as a starting-point and then look at the centuries that follow.

All this is, of course, a modern construct. As is well known, Tacitus saw only decline after the Twelve Tables.[1] The Romans themselves did not reflect much on the development of their law in terms of quality, although there is no shortage of disparaging statements about law and lawyers. The idea that the best of Roman jurisprudence is to be found

[1] Tacitus, *Annales* 3.27: *duodecim tabulae, finis aequi iuris*.

between the first century B.C. and the first quarter of the third century A.D. is not found until the legal humanists of the early modern period began to occupy themselves with the historical dimension of legal texts.[2] The vilification of the Justinianic codification as the source of corruption of the original writings of Paul, Ulpian *e tutti quanti* is first found in those quarters and reached the zenith of its popularity in the first half of the 20th century; it has much contributed to the image of a 'classical' period followed by one of which not much is to be said in its favour. Although the established opinion now seems to be that Justinian's *Digest* has preserved the original version of the 'classical' texts to a much greater extent than has been thought in the past, the word 'classical' has kept its traditional connotation.[3]

What brought about the end of the classical period? Indeed, one might also raise the question of what caused its beginning. It seems not to be overstating to say that the beginning of the classical period coincided with a turbulent period in Roman history. The civil wars and the end of the Roman Republic can hardly be considered to offer an ideal and quiet background for legal reflection. Yet, already before Augustus we find great names such as Q. Mucius Scaevola and Ser. Sulpicius Rufus, to name but two.[4] But it is to the end of the classical period that I should like to pay attention, and to the understandable inclination to connect the end of legal writing in the classical tradition with the idea of a crisis: a crisis of Roman society, a crisis of jurisprudence, or a crisis of both.

I am not advocating an entirely different opinion of the quality of Roman legal writing in the period traditionally called 'classical'. Nor am I disputing that in the first half of the third century this tradition was coming to an end. What I should like to do instead is to try and place this phenomenon in a wider context and to revalue what followed.

In the first Impact of Empire workshop of 2000 our '*princeps*' Lukas de Blois gave a paper on "Roman jurists and the crisis of the third

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[2] For the humanists, see, e.g., H.E. Troje, *Graeca leguntur* (Cologne-Vienna 1971).

[3] J.H.A. Lokin argues in favour of a very restricted scope for interpolations in the hands of Tribonian's committee: The End of an Epoch. Epilegomena to a Century of Interpolation Criticism, in R. Feenstra et al. (eds.), *Collatio iuris romani, Études dédiées à Hans Ankum à l'occasion de son 65e anniversaire* (Amsterdam 1995), 261–273.

[4] Fully recognizing the civil unrest, Bruce Frier even seems to value it as a positive factor in the creation of a Roman legal profession (B.W. Frier, *The Rise of the Roman Jurists. Studies in Cicero's Pro Caecina* (Princeton 1985)), especially his conclusion, 269 ff.

century A.D. in the Roman empire". After outlining the process as he perceived it, he concluded:

> A consequence of the relative degradation of learned jurists within the imperial administration may have been that responsa and treatises of the great jurists, who during the first decades of the century had obtained a place in the centre of power, now became classic, deriving their status not only from the outstanding qualities of the authors, but also from the high positions which those authors had held. This may have kept their successors from trying to emulate or surpass them, which in its turn may have ended the publication of learned juridical treatises.[5]

I do not doubt that this has contributed to the end of legal writing in the classical tradition. A similar line of reasoning had been followed by Detlef Liebs in a survey of Roman legal literature of this period for the *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, who also mentioned the "spätantike Hang zur Kanonisierung und Heiligenverehrung", preventing the "Entfaltung neuer Literatur, bis auch die Fähigkeit dazu verkümmerte."[6] Other reasons listed by Liebs are also found in De Blois's paper; although the argument is slightly different, the two would have no difficulty in agreeing. Interestingly, Liebs places the beginning of bureaucratization already in the reign of Claudius and sees a vigorous push in that of Hadrian; we must note that the flowering of Roman jurisprudence hardly seems to have been affected.

In 2005, volume 12 of the revised *Cambridge Ancient History* appeared, dealing with the 'crisis of empire'. Two chapters deal with the law, the first describing 'high classical', the second 'epiclassical' Roman law. Chapter 7a, by David Ibbetson, concludes with the following reasons for these writings to have to come to an end:

> High classical law was unsustainable on its own terms. It was also subject to external stresses. The subtlety of thought of Paul, Papinian and Ulpian demanded educational continuity if it was to be developed by the legal thinkers of the next generation; but legal education in Rome was utterly haphazard. A strong measure of imperial indulgence was necessary if legal doctrine was to continue to be elaborated by men who were imperial functionaries as well as private lawyers; but not all emperors were so indulgent to lawyers. And political quietude was essential if jurists

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[5] L. de Blois, Roman Jurists and the Crisis of the Third Century A.D. in the Roman Empire, in Id. (ed.), *Administration, Prosopography and Appointment Policies in the Roman Empire* (Impact of Empire 1) (Amsterdam 2001), 136–153, at 153.

[6] D. Liebs in K. Sallmann (ed.), *Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike 4: Die Literatur des Umbruchs. III. Jurisprudenz* (Munich 1997), 217.

> were to have the professional leisure to think deeply about abstract and complex legal issues.[7]

The lack of political quietude, implied for the end of the classical period, is closely related to De Blois's argument, who plausibly attributes the changing role of the jurists to the fact that military men were needed more and were therefore in a better position to establish themselves at the centre of power. It is the argument that emphatically draws on the perception of a crisis of the empire and connects it with a crisis of, or at least profound change in, jurisprudence.

Ibbetson's first point is very interesting. It conjures up the image of a tottering pile of books, and the addition of yet another volume making the pile collapse under its own weight. But is it not the case that legal education in Rome had been haphazard from the beginning? And is it not also true that systematic legal education is a phenomenon of Late Antiquity, as is also noted by David Johnston, who wrote the next chapter in het *CAH*² 12, 7b, dealing with the period 235–300? Johnston sees 'no sudden break or sharp discontinuity' in what he has called 'epiclassical' Roman law.[8] The imperial chancery became more prominent, as is witnessed by the rescript system, and we see attempts at creating order in chaos. The two 'codifications' of the end of the third century, the *Codices Gregorianus* and *Hermogenianus*, collect imperial constitutions. Traditionally they have been seen as private enterprises rather than as 'official' compilations, though for no solid reason, as Johnston maintains.[9] As to juristic writings, against a background of continuity there is the new phenomenon of the compilation.[10] 'The reign of Diocletian forms the natural terminus for discussion of the classical period of Roman law'.[11]

If we see the end of a tradition of producing commentaries on the Edict, collections of *responsa*, *quaestiones* and similar writings, this is first of all the end of presenting legal opinion in the form of established genres. A different question, however, is whether the development of the substantive law also underwent change as a consequence of the changing garments in which legal opinion was being clothed. In fact,

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[7] A.K. Bowman, P. Garnsey and A. Cameron (eds.), *CAH*² 12, *The Crisis of Empire* (Cambridge 2005), 198–199.

[8] *CAH*² 12, 200.

[9] *CAH*² 12, 202–203.

[10] *CAH*² 12, 203.

[11] *CAH*² 12, 207.

Johnston's statement that 'continuity seems to be the leading characteristic'[12] is a judgement also reached in 1971 by Franz Wieacker in a much-quoted paper dedicated to this problem. One of his main conclusions is that the third century is not a 'post-classical' period, but rather 'un dernier stade de la jurisprudence du Haut-Empire, que justement nous nommons 'classique'!', and therefore, in view of the changed circumstance and the end of 'le jeu spirituel de la libre discussion entre autorités personnelles et spirituelles' – a game in which he had perceived signs of lassitude already at the accession of the Severi – he preferred the term 'epiclassical' for the third century, in which he is echoed by Johnston.[13]

Diocletian established a new order in many respects, but did not bring about an innovation of the law. For that to happen the Romans had to wait at least until Constantine, and not everybody agrees on the innovation that has been supposed to take place with the emancipation of Christianity.[14]

In short, it is doubtful that the unmistakable crisis of the third century should be reflected in the development of Roman law in other than outward characteristics. To be sure, there is a change in the position of the jurists, there is less brilliance to be admired in their writings, but, then, we have far fewer of those. Is all this a sign of decline? Should we read this as the natural consequence of a general decline observable in all respects, an observation responsable for a general image of deterioration, in short a negative image of Late Antiquity?

Rather than questioning the ideas of classical, epiclassical and postclassical, I should like to offer a few observations on the third to sixth centuries. The fact remains that, as a monument to the 'classical' period, there is Justinian's *Digest*, eternalising the jurisprudence of that period to codify Roman law in a form he considered suitable for the sixth century. If Justinian composed his *Digest* from the writings of mainly second- and third-century jurists, still available to him in the sixth century, what, then, of the period between 250 and 525?

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[12] *CAH*² 12, 205.

[13] F. Wieacker, 'Le droit romain de la mort d'Alexandre Sévère à l'avènement de Dioclétien (235–284 apr. J.-C.), *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 4ᵉ S. 49 (1971), 201–223; 222–223.

[14] Cf. most recently C. Humfress, Civil Law and Social Life, in N. Lenski (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine* (Cambridge 2006), 205–225, at 207–2088 with n. 8.

It is not my aim to offer an incisive revaluation of the traditional historiography of Roman law. What I would like to attempt is pointing out a number of factors which, in my opinion, must have played a role in the history of Roman law in the period concerned and have been insufficiently taken into account by those who try to explain the changes in the third century.

Changing demands from the jurists by society

The depletion of traditional legal genres in the third century has been deplored by cultural pessimists and attributed to the lack of social stability: the crisis of the third century is supposed to have been the obstacle to a continued debate on the finer points of Roman private legal doctrine. While it is undisputed that the crisis of the third century has done precisely that, it was not the task of third-century society to enable the jurists to continue their debates. The law principally has to answer the questions of society: if social problems and needs change, inevitably the answers of the jurists will be to different questions as well. This has nothing to do with a possible decline of the law, but if your interest as a legal historian concerns private law – as indeed the main interest of romanists has traditionally done – the third century presents itself as the end of an epoch. This shift of focus of the Roman jurists, however, does not necessarily indicate a decline in legal thinking, but a change in society. Incidentally, historians are probably better served with legal sources of the third and later centuries as sources with which to answer their questions. In exaggeration, but in order to emphasise the point: what may present itself as a crisis in the eyes of the historian of Roman private law may make an impression of great flourishing on the social and economic historian.

Roman law and the Constitutio Antoniniana

When in 212 Roman citizenship was extended to the population of the Roman empire at large – I skip the finer details, but so much has generally been accepted – the position of Roman law changed at the same time. For a very long time students of Roman law have taken this to mean that from now on all inhabitants of the empire had to follow Roman law rather than their own tribal law; consequently, cases in

which this did not seem to happen were taken as instances of defective application of Roman law, along the road of inevitable romanisation of the law. The problem of "Reichsrecht und Volksrecht" has been seen largely in that light.[15] While there is undoubtedly some truth in this, there are also other aspects which have increasingly received attention in more recent years. Of course, if one sees the results of the increased interaction of Roman law and local law exclusively in the light of 'pure' Roman law and from an expectation of that law being applied, the result cannot be other than disappointing. A rather negative valuation of the 'law of the papyri' – the term itself is significant – would be a logical outcome, as indeed has been the outcome in certain quarters.[16] The *Constitutio Antoniniana* was issued in the same period in which traditional legal writing comes to an end; one wonders whether there is a connection. Naturally, once the traditional sources are no longer available, the focus of scholarly attention shifts to other sources, among which papyri are prominent, thus perhaps only compounding the problem. It seems reasonable to admit to the possibility that the effect the extension of the franchise had on the law was not merely a one-way process.

One legal system or two? 'Western' and 'Eastern' Roman law

The emphasis on the end of 'classical' legal writing in traditional historiography of Roman law has been unduly strengthened by the – understandably – Latin perspective of scholars, and the predominant approach from Latin has only increased in recent times. The division of the Roman empire has contributed to the existence of separate Latin and Greek perspectives, although, from a technical legal point of view, there has always been the undivided nature of the concept of *imperium* and the question of the binding force of constitutions of one emperor in the other half of the empire. In the meantime there can be no doubt that the constitutional changes of the late third century also effected the position of the jurists: the existence of two centres of power created the possibility of diverging legal traditions in different languages. Although

[15] After L. Mitteis, *Reichsrecht und Volksrecht in den östlichen Provinzen des römischen Kaiserreichs* (Leizig 1891).

[16] For a more balanced view, see now J. Beaucamp, 'L'histoire du droit byzantin face à la papyrologie juridique. Bilan et perspectives, in L. Burgmann (ed.), *Fontes Minores* XI (Frankfurt 2005), 5–55.

the distinction between Western and Eastern Roman law lacks a formal basis, the reality of the incipient diverging traditions cannot be denied. From there, it is but a small step to study just one of the two, losing sight of contemporaneous development in the other.

One legal system or more? 'Reichsrecht' and 'Volksrecht' or 'Volksrechte'

The temptation to treat West and East separately is reinforced by the existence of the papyri. Legal papyri – legal in the wider sense – give rise to two problems: first, they do not, as a rule, confirm the application of 'official' Roman law, even when they are written in Latin, and second, by the nature of the writing material, they all have been preserved in the dry and hot desert conditions in the Eastern half of the empire, and are obviously predominantly in Greek. Even leaving aside the problem of 'Reichsrecht' and 'Volksrecht' existing side by side, the question then arises whether the answers for the (Greek-speaking) East may be extrapolated to the Latin West.[17]

From West to East, from Latin to Greek

As has already been alluded to above during the third century the centre of gravity of the Roman empire was moving towards the East, culminating in the inauguration of Constantinople as a capital in 330. While the empire did not, of course, become Greek rather than Latin overnight, the event confirmed a tendency which could be observed for a longer time already, also where the law is concerned. Certainly, the language of the law remained Latin, and the law was to hold out as a stronghold for Latin longer than anything else, but the phenomenon deserves closer attention.

The *Digest* confirms the impression of an all-Latin legal world. All jurists are writing in Latin, even Modestinus, whose treatise on *excusatio* from duties as a tutor and curator is the best-known exception, and whose *captatio benevolentiae* at its beginning, that there was no Greek legal terminology to deal with Roman legal concepts, has been quoted

[17] See also above and the general discussion in R.S. Bagnall, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History* (London 1995).

ad nauseam. This should not obscure the provenance of the jurists: Ulpian came from Syria, Modestinus from northern Asia Minor. Papinian may have hailed from Africa, in which case he will have been a native speaker of Latin, but Syria is at least as probable, just as Gaius probably came from a hellenistic province. Paul's origin is unknown, but "[a]us altem italischem Blut stammte er also nicht", to quote Kunkel.[18] These examples may serve to show that, *pace* Modestinus, there must have been many jurists who, though competent in Latin, will have spoken, and perhaps also thought, in Greek.

A remarkable dossier of inscriptions concerning a jurist, born in the East and having a 'Roman' career in the first half of the third century, has been collected and studied by Fergus Millar.[19] M.Cn. Licinius Rufinus, known from the *Digest* as the author of *Regulae*,[20] was born in Thyatira in Lydia. One of his early posts was that of *ab epistulis Graecis*, and later in life he rose to prominence in the entourage of the emperor as *amicus Caesaris*. As *iuris peritus* he had to know Latin, of course, as he did, but that does not mean that he was no longer 'Greek'. "Becoming Roman, staying Greek", as Greg Woolf,[21] must have applied to Licinius Rufinus and to the many jurists from the East generally. That these jurists knew and used Latin should not be taken as a move from Greek to Latin; rather the underlying current must have been a shift towards Greek as the language of the law.

We have a clear picture of the end of this development. In Justinian's time jurists were trained to acquire, in an ideal case, a good passive knowledge of Latin to enable them to work with the new legislation, which essentially was an anthology of existing Latin sources. The leading jurists were bilingual, but the great majority undoubtedly thought, spoke and wrote in Greek. The language of Justinian's *Novellae* demonstrates that the fiction of Latin as the language of the law was given up during

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[18] On all these see W. Kunkel, *Herkunft und soziale Stellung der römischen Juristen* (Weimar 1952), 45; more recently Liebs 1997, op. cit. (n. 6): III. Jurisprudenz, who advocates Africa as the birth-place of Papinian (117–118). But we should remember that Papinian even wrote in Greek an *astunomikos monobiblos*.

[19] F. Millar, The Greek East and Roman Law: the Dossier of M.Cn. Licinius Rufinus, *Journal of Roman Studies* 89 (1999), 90–108.

[20] O. Lenel, *Palingenesia iuris civilis* (Leipzig 1889), vol. i, cols. 559–562.

[21] G. Woolf, Becoming Roman, staying Greek: Culture, Identity and the Civilizing Process in the Roman East, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 40 (1994), 116–143.

his reign. The final outcome, as I have stated on various occasions, was the birth of Byzantine law.

This process of transformation did not happen within one single generation. The abandonment of Rome as the centre of power must have been conducive to a more prominent role of Greek as a working-language of the law. It is my firm conviction that, for the period between the *Constitutio Antoniniana* and the death of Justinian, we must reckon with a Latino-Greek legal culture developing into a Graeco-Latin one in the eastern half of the empire. The *Fragmenta Sinaitica* are a witness of that process; they date to the years between 439 and 529 and discuss Roman law in the same way as the law professors of the Justinianic age.[22] From the third century onwards, in the East, which, as we have seen, already was contributing many of the leading jurists, the discussions of the jurists must have been evolving less and less in Latin.[23]

If this development has played a part in the end of classical legal writing in Latin, the question arises why this tradition should not have continued in Greek. Here, I would suggest, the strong Latin tradition of the law may have prevented a smooth transition, although this cannot have been the only reason. Retrospectively, in any case, we must conclude that there never was to be an equally creative Roman legal culture in the Greek language.

Conclusion

These five points together are, in my opinion, essential to be taken into account when the end of legal writing in the 'classical' tradition is discussed. The political crisis of the third century is part of the explanation why it should have come to an end about 250 at the latest, but it is by no means the only explanation. If the turbulent last decades of the Republic are an unlikely period to explain sufficiently why it was

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[22] Easiest accessible in *Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani* II (Florence 1968²), 637–651. The original papyri have been lost. H.J. Scheltema dates them after 472 without offering his reasons and postulates between these fragments and the Justinianic age a sharp decline in the knowledge of Latin: (Subseciva X.) Die Fragmenta Sinaitica, *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 31 (1963), 100 = *Idem, Opera minora* (Groningen 2004), 132.

[23] F. Millar, *The Greek Roman Empire. Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408–450)* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2006), appeared too late for me to be taken into account here.

precisely at that point in time that the greatest period of Roman law should have begun, the crisis, or at least unrest, of the first half of the third century A.D. should not have prevented its continuance. Other factors must have played at least as important a role. Among these, the shift towards Greek seems to me to have been underestimated.

It has been pointed out by others that there is not much reason to speak of a falling of legal standards before the end of the century. As far as jurisprudence is concerned, there are changes, certainly, but there is no crisis. Apparently we have to be careful in assuming a direct causal relation between lack of political quietude and a deterioration of jurisprudence. Should we not admit that it was not just the political crisis, but rather the effects of all sorts of changes that rang the death-knell for 'classical' jurisprudence?

A final word on 'classical'. The word, of course, implies an idealised image of a certain stage in the development of jurisprudence. The question, then, remains whether it belonged to an ideal period in antique culture generally.

The first edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History* stopped at A.D. 324; there is not much room for decline between 225 and 325, and decline was in fact taken to have started much earlier. In that view, the rise, flowering and fall of Roman civilisation apparently did not coincide with the rise, flowering and fall of Roman jurisprudence. In that view, the jurists were late and must have seemed singularly out of touch with the times. Unless we postulate a serious distortion in our sources, the flowering of the jurists was later than that, or managed to persist much longer.

Gibbon's enthusiasm for Antonine times is more convenient for legal historians. Many of them would have no problem in recognizing the greater part of the second century of our era as the most felicitous decades of Roman jurisprudence. But what, then, of the unmistakable quality of the successors of the second-century jurists? Gibbon fully recognizes their greatness. In his division of the history of Roman law between the Twelve Tables and Justinian into "three periods of almost equal duration", he sketches the following image:

> In the third period, between the reigns of Alexander and Justinian, the oracles of jurisprudence were almost mute. The measure of curiosity had been filled; the throne was occupied by tyrants and Barbarians; the active spirits were diverted by religious disputes; and the professors of Rome, Constantinople, and Berytus, were humbly content to repeat the lessons of their more enlightened predecessors.

and continues in what seems to be his conclusion: "From the slow advances and rapid decay of these legal studies, it may be inferred that they require a state of peace and refinement." The modern established opinion, then, is not different from Gibbon's view.[24]

One might also point out that we have abandoned the traditional negative view of Late Antiquity, and, in contrast, nowadays even allow for a flourishing economy and culture in that period. While this helps to see something positive in later Roman law, in Latin or in Greek, it does not change the fact that legal writing in the classical tradition came to an end in the first half of the third century.

We should not worry too much about a possible lack of conformity of the life-cycle of Roman jurisprudence with that of Roman civilisation. The end of a certain tradition in the practice of Roman law and Roman legal writing does not signify the end of Roman law itself. It is more profitable to study what came to replace the traditional genres. There is no reason to infer, from the crisis of the third century, a crisis of jurisprudence.

Groningen, October 2006

[24] Quotations from the famous 44th chapter of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (Idea of Roman Jurisprudence) taken from the World's Classics edition of 1904, volume 4, 541.

CODEX JUSTINIANUS 6.21.1: FLORUS'S CASE

WILLEM ZWALVE

Florus was a common soldier. We do not know where he was stationed, we do not know what rank he held and we do not know what befell him in his career. What saved him from total oblivion is the fact that in or about 212, he sent a petition to his commander in chief, the emperor Caracalla. The imperial 'rescript' in reply to that petition runs as follows:

> If your brother, while a soldier, appointed you his heir, especially for property which he had at home, you cannot claim that which he left in the camp, even if he who was appointed heir of the same refuses to accept it. But those entitled to the estate become his heirs at law, provided no one has been substituted in the place of the said heir, and it is clearly proved that your brother did not consent that the castrensian property should go to you, for the will of a soldier in active service is observed as law.[1]

Florus had run into considerable problems in winding up the estate of his brother, also a soldier, who had died somewhere in the vastness of the Empire. It concerned a problem frequently confronting relatives of deceased soldiers. Military men were literally privileged, that is to say that certain rules of law binding upon civilians did not apply to them. A military testament is a good example. Florus's brother knew he had an option that was not open to civilians, *i.e.* to make *two* testaments. Ordinary civilians were (and are) only allowed to have *one* testament: a last will is a *last* will, so that every testament revokes all previous testamentary dispositions. That was not so with military men and there was some good sense in that privilege, as military men as a rule did not have one estate, but two. Why?

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[1] *Codex Justinianus* 6.21.1: *Frater tuus miles si te specialiter bonis quae in paganico habebat heredem fecit, bona quae in castris reliquit petere non potes, etiamsi is qui eorum heres institutus est adire ea noluerit: sed ab intestato succedentes veniunt, modo si in eius loco substitutus non est et liquido probatur fratrem tuum castrensia bona ad te pertinere noluisse. nam voluntas militis expeditione occupati pro iure servatur* (all English translations of Roman legal sources are based on Scott's translations: *The Civil Law*, 17 volumes, Cincinnati 1932).

Roman soldiers served a very long tour of duty, at least twenty-five years, and all that time they were far away from home. For a long time, 'home', to them, had *not* meant their own home, where wife and children awaited the return of the veteran, because a soldier was not allowed to marry. It was only Septimius Severus who abolished this rule.[2] So, in Florus's time, 'home', to a soldier, more often than not still meant his parental home. It was there that he had a vested interest, for on the demise of his parents a soldier shared in their inheritance with his brothers and sisters. It will not have been unusual among soldiers to invest some of their income at home, as Florus's brother had clearly done. This part of a soldier's estate was known as his *bona paganica*, his 'civil estate'. The adjective 'paganicus' no doubt refers to the estate that was invested at home, in his village (*pagus*) of origin. Separate from this part of his estate, a soldier would accumulate a 'military estate' (*bona castrensia*) during his time of service. As I see it, it will, as a rule, have consisted of a substantial claim against the imperial *fiscus*. I cannot accept that soldiers were so incautious as to accept all their pay (*stipendium*), let alone the substantive occasional benefits (*donativa*) they were awarded, *in cash*. They will have allowed it to accumulate, just drawing small amounts in cash (*in aere minuto*) and only occasionally large sums to invest at home. We know a lot about the financial dealings of common Roman soldiers by the spectacular finds at Vindolanda. We hear about loans advanced to soldiers, which clearly are to be interpreted as advances to be set off against their claim against the *fiscus* at the expiration of their service. More often than not, the *bona castrensia* will have formed the bulk of the estate of a soldier, certainly so if it is borne in mind that it concerned his accumulated earnings. This explains the soldiers' privilege of being allowed to make two separate wills, one concerning his *bona paganica* and another disposing of his *bona castrensia*. This is what Florus's brother had done. In one will, he had named Florus as heir to his *bona paganica*, whereas in another he had named an anonymous person as heir to his *bona castrensia*. The problem was that the latter had renounced the inheritance and Florus's relatives at home – no doubt his brothers and sisters, already passed over in favour of Florus in the will concerning the *bona paganica* – now claimed their share of the military estate. This is a claim not supported by the common law of Rome, for the estate of a deceased person could

[2] Herodian 3.8.4 and see M. Kaser, *Das römische Privatrecht* I (München 1971), 317.

not be distributed *pro parte testatus, pro parte intestatus*.[3] It is because of this maxim, that Florus claimed title to the entire estate of his brother. The common law of Rome favoured testamentary succession over intestate succession and this *favor testamenti* implied that the testamentary heir should succeed to the entire estate.[4] As it happened, however, this rule did *not* apply to military men. They were allowed to make two wills and consequently they were also allowed to make one will, disposing of one part of their estate only, and leaving the distribution of the other part to the law. Florus's brother had *not* named Florus as *heres substitutus* in the will disposing of his *bona castrensia*, a clear indication that it was not his intention that Florus should succeed to his military estate. Consequently, Caracalla ordered this part of the estate of Florus's brother to be distributed among all his relatives. It must have come as a bitter disappointment to Florus. The imperial Chancery added an *obiter dictum*, emphasizing considerations of public policy: 'It is of utmost importance, that the last will and testament of a soldier on expedition is upheld' (*voluntas militis expeditione occupati pro iure servatur*). This statement was to have a curious 'Nachleben', as we shall see shortly, but before addressing that, I must emphasize another aspect of the imperial rescript reported in *Codex Justinianus* 6.21.1. It concerns the *form* of a military testament.

Wills and citizenship

The usual testament of a Roman citizen in the first two centuries of the Empire took its form from praetorian rules,[5] substantially eliminating the testament of the Roman *ius civile* (*testamentum per aes et libram*).[6] It was – even from a modern continental perspective – rather an informal document, consisting of a deed, signed and sealed by the testator and seven witnesses. The emperor Antoninus Pius held that a testament, drawn up in this way, was valid.[7] Even before that, Julius Caesar had disregarded the ancient rules of *ius civile*: he granted his soldiers the

[3] *Digesta* 50.17.7: 'Our law does not suffer a civilian to die both testate and intestate' (*ius nostrum non patitur eundem in paganis et testato et intestato decessisse*). See on this rule also *Institutes* 2.14.5 and *Digesta* 29.1.6.

[4] *Digesta* 28.5.13.2.

[5] Kaser 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 680.

[6] On the form of the older Roman wills see especially Gaius 2.101 ff.

[7] See Gaius 2.120 en 149a.

privilege of disposing of their estate in an informal manner, but according to Ulpian, "that was a temporary arrangement".[8] Nevertheless, later emperors, such as Titus, Domitian and Nerva, granted similar privileges to their soldiers.[9] The informal 'soldier's' will obtained its definite sanction in a mandate by Nerva's successor, Trajan, a statutory instrument fully reported in the *Corpus Iuris* twice. It was obviously a matter of the highest concern, even to Justinian: "The privilege accorded to persons serving in the army which imparts validity to their wills, no matter how they have been executed".[10] It is generally believed that the relaxation of the formalities of even the informal praetorian will was inspired by the presence of so many foreigners in the army.[11] Think about the soldiers in the camp at Vindolanda. Most of them were not Roman citizens at all, but *Batavi* and *Tungri*.[12] They only became Roman citizens after their discharge (*missio*) from the army. As we know from the Vindolanda letters, these Batavians were in close contact with their home front, and it is, therefore, no wonder that Trajan tried to reassure the peace of mind of potential recruits, soldiers in active service and

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[8] *Digesta* 29.1.1 pr. (Ulpian): 'The Divine Julius Cæsar was the first who granted to soldiers free power to make a will, but this concession was only temporary. The first after him to confer this power was the Divine Titus, and then Domitianus. The Divine Nerva subsequently conceded the greatest indulgence to soldiers in this respect, and Trajanus followed his example. From that time forward there was inserted in the Imperial Edicts the following provision: "It has come to my notice that wills executed by our fellow-soldiers have been frequently presented which would be the subject of dispute if the laws were strictly applied and enforced; so, in accordance with the benevolent promptings of my mind with reference to my excellent and most faithful fellow-soldiers, I have thought that indulgence should be extended to their inexperience, so that no matter in what way they may draw up their wills, they shall be confirmed. Let them, therefore, draw them up in whatever form they desire, in the best way that they can, and the mere wish of the testators will be sufficient for the distribution of their estates".' (*Militibus liberam testamenti factionem primus quidem divus Iulius Caesar concessit: sed ea concessio temporalis erat. postea vero primus divus Titus dedit: post hoc Domitianus: postea divus Nerva plenissimam indulgentiam in milites contulit: eamque Traianus secutus est et exinde mandatis inseri coepit caput tale. caput ex mandatis: "cum in notitiam meam prolatum sit subinde testamenta a commilitonibus relicta proferri, quae possint in controversiam deduci, si ad diligentiam legum revocentur et observantiam: secutus animi mei integritudinem erga optimos fidelissimosque commilitones simplicitati eorum consulendum existimavi, ut quoquomodo testati fuissent, rata esset eorum voluntas. faciant igitur testamenta quo modo volent, faciant quo modo poterint sufficiatque ad bonorum suorum divisionem faciendam nuda voluntas testatoris"*).

[9] *Loc. cit.*

[10] *Digesta* 29.1.24 (Florentinus): *id privilegium, quod militantibus datum est, ut quoquo modo facta ab his testamenta rata sint.* See also *Institutes* 2.11.1.

[11] Kaser 1971, op. cit. (n. 2), 681: "Die Vergünstigung…will den Nichtrömern im Heer entgegenkommen, denen die römischen Formen nicht geläufig sind".

[12] A. Birley, *Garrison Life at Vindolanda: a Band of Brothers* (Stroud 2002).

veterans, by assuring the validity of their testaments, however informally made. One had to bear in mind, and even give in to, the *nimia peritia* of these alien employees.[13] There were, however, limits to this leniency. A military testament only stayed in force until a year after discharge. After that period, it had to be renewed in a way that complied with the formalities required from a normal Roman citizen.[14] Every soldier must have known that there was potentially something wrong with an informal military will. I believe this sheds a new light on Florus's case. It was received (*accepta*) in the imperial Chancery in 212, the very same year the *constitutio Antoniniana* conferred Roman citizenship on practically all the inhabitants of the Empire.

A problem of transitional law?

The *constitutio Antoniniana* continues to amaze, not in the least because a statute of such far-reaching consequence is omitted in the *Codex Justinianus*. Except for a casual reference by Ulpian, it is also completely ignored in the *Digest*.[15] Nevertheless, it had an enormous impact, if only because, with one stroke of the pen, Roman law became the law of all the inhabitants of the Empire. This must have created enormous problems, calling for complex provisions of transitional law. In fact, however, nothing of the kind is heard of. On the contrary: the statute seems to have been a tremendous success. A near-contemporary of Florus, Saint Gregory the Miracle Worker, informs us that within a generation after its passing, everyone who aspired to a career in the imperial bureaucracy struggled for admission to the Beirut law school in order to be imbued with a new kind of learning that was there to stay, causing the steady decline of the old rhetorical schools of Antioch, Athens and Alexandria.[16] Nevertheless, there must have been transitional problems and Florus's case may well have been one. All foreigners in the army had suddenly become Roman citizens, and they may well have asked themselves what it meant that as from then Roman law

[13] *Institutes* 2.11 pr.
[14] *Institutes* 2.11.3.
[15] *Digesta* 1.5.17, see also *Novella* 78.5, where Justinian casually refers to the *constitutio*, erroneously (but understandably) attributing it to Marcus Aurelius.
[16] Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Address to Origen* 1.7 and 5.59–62; see for the text in H. Crouzel (ed.), Grégoire le Thaumaturge, *Remerciement à Origène* (Paris 1969).

applied to all their acts, especially their testaments. Did it mean that the rationale of the special privilege of all military men to make a last will in whatever form they preferred had now evaporated? Did it mean that the common law maxim *nemo pro parte testatus, pro parte intestatus decedi potest* applied to their estates as well? There are sound reasons to reply to such questions in the affirmative. The praetorian will of Roman common law was, in itself, a rather informal affair: all that was needed was the seal and signature of the testator and seven witnesses. It has even been held that, whenever one or more witnesses did not have a private seal, they could all sign under one seal.[17] All of this could easily be done in the camp at Vindolanda. But consequences like this imply change, a deviation from the trodden path and, most importantly, a departure from military custom. Soldiers do not like that. When seen from this perspective, Caracalla's decision in Florus's case is as could have been expected from an emperor who had been instructed by his father to keep the soldiers satisfied at all cost.[18] Florus based his case on the common law of Rome, but Caracalla insisted that, as far as soldiers were concerned, the common law did not apply and everything remained as before. By turning down Florus's claim, he had sacrificed that soldier's interest to the interests of all his colleagues. Since the Roman army was the biggest employer in the Empire, this meant that a large number of citizens were exempt from all formalities required by common law for the validity of wills. This may have been convenient for soldiers, but it is bad public policy and it raises the question whether Caracalla's *obiter dictum*, that *voluntas militis expeditione occupati pro iure servatur*, did not in fact contain an important restriction, namely that henceforward the military privilege extended to soldiers *on expedition* only.

Miles in expeditione

It seems from a statute of Constantine that the military privilege did indeed extend to soldiers on expedition only:

> Where soldiers on campaign (*in expeditione*) wish to appoint their wives, children, or friends, or any other persons whomsoever, their testamentary heirs, they can do so in any way which they can, or desire; and neither

[17] *Institutes* 2.10.5.
[18] Dio Casssius 77.15.2.

> the merit, the freedom, nor the rank of their wives or children shall be called in question when they produce the will of their father. Hence it is permitted, and always shall be permitted by the rules of law, that, if they have written their intentions on the scabbards of their swords, or on their shields, with the crimson letters of their own blood, or have traced them in the dust with the points of their swords, at the time when they were dying in battle, a will of this kind shall be valid.[19]

But the latitude of the military privilege was in doubt, even in Justinian's time. It was for this reason that Justinian decided to remove all doubts and make it clear once and for all that the privilege only concerned *milites in expeditione*:

> In order that all those attached to the army shall not think that they are permitted to make their wills at any time and in any way that they desire, We order that the above-mentioned privilege of executing last wills shall be granted to those alone who are in active military service.[20]

Justinian's provision found its way into modern European Codes.[21] It may seem clear to a layman, but it is certainly not clear to a lawyer. What does the phrase *in expeditionibus occupati* mean? Take, for example, Scott's translation: 'in active military service'. What does that mean? Does it mean that *all* military men 'in active service', that is: those not listed as reservists, may dispose of their property in an informal will, or only those who are actually engaged in a military campaign? This is not mere sophistry, nor is it antiquarian fiddling, for the question was crucial in a case before the English High Court of Justice in 1949 concerning the estate of Roy Wingham, deceased.

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[19] *Codex Justinianus* 6.21.15: *Milites in expeditione degentes, si uxores aut filios aut amicos aut commilitones suos, postremo cuiuslibet generis homines amplecti voluerint supremae voluntatis adfectu, quomodo possint ac velint testentur, nec uxorum aut filiorum eorum, cum voluntatem patris reportaverunt, meritum aut libertas dignitasque quaeratur. (1) proinde sicut iuris rationibus licuit ac semper licebit, si quid in vagina aut in clipeo litteris sanguine suo rutilantibus adnotaverint, aut in pulvere inscripserint gladio sub ipso tempore, quo in proelio vitae sortem derelinquunt, huiusmodi voluntatem stabilem esse oportet.*

[20] *Codex Justinianus* 6.21.17: *ne quidam putarent in omni tempore licere militibus testamenta quomodo voluerint componere, sancimus his solis, qui in expeditionibus occupati sunt, memoratum indulgeri circa ultimas voluntates conficiendas beneficium.*

[21] See, for example, art. 981 of the French civil code and art. 4:98 of the present Dutch civil code.

Wingham's case

Roy Wingham, from Guildford in Surrey, joined the RAF in 1942. He was not destined to see the end of the war, but did not fall in combat. In October 1942, Roy was sent to Canada for training and it was there that he died on the 11th of August 1943, of injuries suffered in an air crash. He was buried in Moosejaw, Saskatchewan. He had not lived to see his twenty-second birthday, but was not without means. His mother, Charlotte Lee, who had died when Roy was only six, must have left him something. In training camp in Saskatchewan, young Wingham had drafted and signed a document containing his last will and testament. He left the bulk of his estate to a certain Gwendolen Andrews and the rest to Roland Burgess. Roy's father, Frank Wingham, contested the validity of the will. Of course he knew that military men were exempted from the provisions of the English Wills Act 1837, but his son was not a *miles in expeditione* and consequently not exempted from the provisions of the act, prescribing attestation of a will by a number of witnesses, not unlike the old Roman praetorian will. The Wills Act 1837 contained the following provision, a direct descendent of *Codex Justinianus* 6.21.17: S. 11: "Any soldier being *in active military service* may dispose of his personal estate as he might have done before the Act". There had been some doubts in the past on the construction of the phrase 'in active military service', but they were removed by no less a renowned jurist than Sir Herbert Jenner-Fust (1778–1852), a judge in the former 'Prerogative and the Arches Court', in the case of *Drummond v. Parish*.[22] It was a precedent binding on the court in the Wingham case and it shook the English legal community, for it was realised that the case had to be decided on the basis of Roman law, or – as Lord Denning put it – "how Roman law would have dealt with its soldiers on Hadrian's wall or in the camp at Chester".[23]

This is not the appropriate place to go into the details of the reception of Roman law in England, so I will make only some short observations. There never was a wholesale reception of Roman law in England as there had been on the continent (and in Scotland). The great courts of common law in Westminster saw to it that the English

[22] (1843) 3 Curt. 522; 163 E(nglish) R(eports) 812. *The English Reports* (Complete verbatim re-issue of all the decisions of the English courts prior to 1866) (Edinburg and London 1900–1932).

[23] *In re Wingham* [1949] P(robate division) 187, at 195.

legal tradition remained largely untainted by the law of Rome. But they were not entirely successful in that effort. They had to allow for some minor courts, where Roman law was allowed to endure, like that "lazy old nook near St. Paul's Churchyard" (Dickens) where the 'doctors of civil law' from Oxford and Cambridge were suffered to cultivate their learning in the courts held in Doctors' Commons. There is no better way to describe their business than in the words of Charles Dickens, who knew what he was talking about because he started his career as a reporter in Doctors' Commons, like his alter ego David Copperfield, who learned that it was

> A little out-of-the-way place, where they administer what is called ecclesiastical law, and play all kinds of tricks with obsolete old monsters of acts of Parliament, which three-fourths of the world know nothing about, and the other fourth supposes to have been dug up, in a fossil state, in the days of the Edwards. It's a place that has an ancient monopoly in suits about people's wills and people's marriages, and disputes among ships and boats.[24]

There can be little doubt that Dickens knew Sir Herbert Jenner-Fust at least from sight, and there is a very good chance that it is precisely that learned lawyer whom he describes in one of the *Sketches by Boz* about Doctors' Commons. It was there, in the Hall of Doctors' Commons, that the case of *Drummond v. Parish* was decided and, indeed, a trick was played with an act of Parliament.

Major-general Drummond died at Woolwich on the 1st of January 1843. At the time of his death he was an officer on full pay, holding a commission in Her Majesty's army and filling the office of Director-General of the Royal Artillery. A testamentary paper was found locked up in a private repository of the deceased; it was dated the 26th of June, 1842; it was signed by the deceased, and had a seal opposite to the signature, but it was *not* attested by witnesses, as it should have been according to the Wills Act of 1837. The will was opposed by the next of kin of the general, but it was contended that it came under the exception of s. 11 of the Act, as the general was 'in active military service' at the time of his death. Could it be held that all persons belonging to the British army, as the general most certainly was, ought to be considered 'in active military service'? Sir Herbert felt that would be a most startling proposition, as it would except a very large body of

[24] Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, chapter 23.

persons from the Wills Act. He, therefore, decided to put a restrictive construction on s. 11 of the Wills Act by calling in the aid of legal history. He referred to the fact that the exception originated in the Statute of Frauds (1677), a very important statute introducing formalities for a wide range of legal acts, the making of a will concerning personal property among them. Before that statute, Englishmen could make a will by word of mouth; after that statute they had to comply with certain formalities, *except* soldiers 'on active military service' who were exempted and were free to make a will as they might before the act. Sir Herbert further referred to some remarks made by Sir Leoline Jenkins (1625–1685), a famous civilian and the author of the Statute of Frauds, who is said to have claimed some merit for having thus obtained for the soldiers of the English army "the full benefit of the testamentary privileges of the Roman army".[25] There could, therefore, be no doubt "that the principle of the exception was borrowed from the civil <*i.e.* Roman> law; and that, to ascertain the extent and meaning of the exception, the civil law may be fairly resorted to".[26] After having thus succeeded in bringing Roman law into the fore, Sir Herbert continued on a broad survey of the Roman legal sources and all the authorities, medieval and modern, opining on them. Of course, he came to the conclusion that the exemption clause in Queen Victoria's Act ought to be construed as complying with Justinian's exemption clause in *Codex Justinianus* 6.21.17. The only thing that remained to be done after that assertion, was ascertaining what precisely was meant by the phrase *milites in expeditione occupati*. After carefully scrutinizing the Roman sources and the civilian authorities, Sir Herbert decided that only soldiers making a will "on the field of battle or marching against the enemy" were exempted. That was the law of England when Roy Wingham's case was brought to the attention of the court in 1949.

By that time, a heavy retribution had been exacted for the tricks played by the 'doctors' with perfectly plain English acts of Parliament. Doctors' Commons was dissolved in 1858, after that society's ancient monopoly to practice in the ecclesiastical courts (and the Court of Admiralty) had been abolished. The old building in Paternoster Row was torn down in 1867 to make way for Queen Victoria Street and

[25] For this quote see *Drummond v. Parish* (1843) 3 Curt. 522, on 531; 163 ER 812, 815.

[26] *Drummond v. Parish* (1843) 3 Curt. 522, 531; 163 ER 812, 815 *per* Sir Herbert Jenner-Fust.

the valuable library, a veritable monument to the life of Roman law in England, was sold by the piece, to the everlasting disgrace of the English legal community. The old ecclesiastical courts themselves, the Court of the Arches among them, were finally abolished by two great reforming acts, the Judicature Acts of 1873 and 1874. Their jurisdiction was delegated to a special branch of the newly created High Court of Justice, the 'Probate Division', nicknamed the court of 'Wives, Wills and Wrecks'. It was there that Wingham's case was decided by Pilcher, J. He declined to grant the plaintiffs Gwendolen Andrews and Ronald Burgess their letters of administration, as he was bound by the construction of s. 11 of the Wills Act in *Drummond v. Parish*.[27] The plaintiffs appealed.

Epilogue

Rumour has it that Lord Denning heard the appeal even before being formally sworn in as a Lord Justice of Appeal, because 'Wingham' was a test case. It was in the immediate aftermath of the war and there were thousands of cases like Roy's case. It was felt that something ought to be done about the Roman test as applied in *Drummond v. Parish* and the newly appointed Lord Justice, soon to become the leading common lawyer of England and one of the greatest legal minds of the twentieth century, got rid of it:

> <Sir Herbert Jenner-Fust> thought that, because the idea of a soldier's privilege was taken from the Roman law, therefore 'in order to ascertain the extent and meaning of the exception, the civil law may fairly be resorted to'. Successive courts of first instance have consequently felt themselves bound to ignore the words of the statute and to substitute for them this test: 'Can the soldier be considered as having been so circumstanced that he would *under Roman law* have been regarded as in "expeditione"?' Sitting in this court I am free to say that that test should no longer be applied. The words of our statute are in plain English: 'in actual military service'. I find them easier to understand and to apply than the Latin: 'in expeditione'. If I were to inquire into the Roman law, I could perhaps after some research say how Roman law would have dealt with its soldiers on Hadrian's Wall or in the ramp at Chester, but I cannot say how it would have dealt with an airman in Saskatchewan, who is only a day's flying from the enemy. Nor can anyone else. This

[27] [1948] P. 138.

> supposed throw-back to Roman law has confused this branch of the law too long. It is time to get back to the statute.[28]

Thus it was that Denning eliminated the Roman test. His closing arguments were – in the words of his biographer – "a song of thanksgiving for those who served in the war so recently ended: Bless them all…bless them all, the long and the short and the tall".[29]

Leiden, November 2006

[28] *In re Wingham* [1949] P. 187, at 195 (italics added).
[29] I. Freeman, *Lord Denning: a Life* (London 1994), 195.

ELEMENTI GIURIDICI ED ECONOMICI NELLA *HISTORIA LAUSIACA*

Antonio Polichetti

Introduzione

La *Historia Lausiaca*, scritta da Palladio tra il 419–420, su preghiera di Lauso,[1] gran ciambellano di Teodosio II, narra le vite degli anacoreti d'Egitto e le vicende religiose e sociali che si accompagnano all'affermarsi del monachesimo orientale fino alla costituzione della Regola di Pacomio.[2] La *Historia Lausiaca* descrive in realtà avvenimenti della seconda metà del quarto secolo d.C. da Costanzo II a Valente e presenta alcuni motivi sull'economia e il diritto che testimoniano l'influenza dell'etica cristiana e del monachesimo,[3] in Egitto e in Asia Minore sulla società e l'economia del quarto secolo d.C., come la rinuncia alle ricchezze da parte di alcune classi sociali e la loro redistribuzione alla Chiesa e ai poveri; la riduzione dello scambio dovuta all'autoproduzione e all'autoconsumo dei centri monastici, che accolgono fino a migliaia di persone, ma che in parte sono anche centri di produzione per la città, spostando il mercato verso forme sempre più circoscritte e limitate, lontano dalla città.

Questa ricerca mira essenzialmente ad esaminare la realtà del mercato nella seconda metà del quarto secolo d.C., dopo la riforma monetaria e l'Editto dei prezzi di Diocleziano (301),[4] e il passaggio alla monetazione

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[1] Chr. Mohrmann, 'Introduzione' in G.J.M. Bartelink (ed.), *La Storia Lausiaca* (Milano 2001[6]), xiv. Cfr. E. Magheri Cataluccio, *Il Lausaïkon di Palladio tra semiotica e storia* (Roma 1984), 28–29.

[2] Sulle caratteristiche letterarie della *Historia Lausiaca* cfr. Cataluccio 1984, op. cit. (n. 1), 13 nota 12; 15; 45; 48 Si veda anche R.T. Mayer, 'Palladius as Biographer and Autobiographer', *Studia Patristica* 17 (1982), 66–71, particolarmente 70.

[3] D.F. Buck, 'The structure of the Lausiac History', *Byzantion*, 46 (1976), 292–307. Il Buck vuole dimostrare "that Palladius constructed the *Lausiac History* upon an autobiographical framework, and to elucidate the chronology of his life." Sulla composizione della *Historia Lausiaca* cfr. Cataluccio 1984, op. cit. (n. 1), 23; 25; 63.

[4] Sull'Editto nei prezzi di Diocleziano e la riforma monetaria cfr. A. Polichetti, *Figure sociali, merci e scambi nell'Edictum Diocletiani et Collegarum de pretiis rerum venalium* (Napoli 2001).

aurea di Costantino.[5] In particolare si vuole verificare quale fosse la condizione del mercato, se esso era ancora regolato dalla moneta e dalla legge della domanda e dell'offerta, o se invece già mostrava i segni di una trasformazione verso altre forme di scambio. A tal fine diviene importante l'analisi dei motivi culturali legati all'affermazione del cristianesimo presso le classi alte, che attraverso la redistribuzione della ricchezza ai poveri e alla Chiesa modificano profondamente le concezioni classiche sull'uso della ricchezza come strumento di investimento e di potere sociale. Anche i monasteri, che interagiscono con il mercato, elaborano una nuova forma di organizzazione produttiva, legata alla celebrazione del lavoro, contro l'idea negativa che di esso aveva avuto la civiltà classica, che diventa fondamentale strumento di redenzione e liberazione spirituale dell'altro. Si passa poi allo studio della moneta (oro; bimetallismo oro e argento) e ai prezzi, anche se è difficile stabilire la loro attendibilità in mancanza di confronti con altri autori. Infine si analizzano alcuni luoghi sulla crisi della giustizia e del diritto, che trovano riscontro anche in Ammiano, e che sembrano essere ormai una critica comune anche presso il mondo cristiano del Mediterraneo orientale.

Status quaestionis

La *Historia Lausiaca*, come la maggior parte dei testi cristiani post-costantiniani, presenta forti rischi di contaminazione nella tradizione manoscritta, si veda ad esempio il problema della attribuzione della *Vita Constantini* ad Eusebio da Cesarea,[6] dovuti a motivi ideologici e di controllo dottrinario all'interno della Chiesa, specie dopo la stagione delle grandi eresie del quarto secolo, come l'arianesimo e il priscillianesimo, e alla volontà di Costantino di unificare con il Concilio di Nicea del 325, le Chiese di Oriente e di Occidente, che, nel corso dell'affermazione ormai secolare del cristianesimo, avevano sviluppato differenze ed

[5] E. Lo Cascio, *Introduzione alla storia romana* (Milano 2002), 436.

[6] F. Winkelmann, 'Zur Geschichte des Authentizitätsproblem der Vita Constantini', *Klio* 40 (1962), 187–243. Ampia sintesi sul problema della autenticità della *Vita Constantini*, considerando i classici studi di Grégoire, Moreau, Franchi dei Cavalieri ecc. In particolarmente si veda H. Grégoire, 'Eusèbe n'est pas l'auteur de la "Vita Constantini"', *Byzantion* 15 (1938) 561–583, particolarmente 575, il quale ritiene la *Vita Constantini* scritta da un falso Eusebio che attinge alla *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

individualità ben difficilmente riconducibili all'unità.[7] Tuttavia, secondo la testimonianza di Girolamo, lo stesso Costantino, in punto di morte, aveva aderito all'arianesimo, per influsso del vescovo Eusebio di Nicomedia. Costanzo II continua la scelta religiosa di Costantino aderendo all'arianesimo. Il monachesimo e l'anacoresi nella *Historia Lausiaca* è una reazione del cristianesimo orientale contro la scelta ariana, in nome della autonomia dall'ingerenza del potere politico.[8]

Per quanto concerne la possibile contaminazione della tradizione manoscritta della *Historia Lausiaca*, nell'àmbito della letteratura monastica i problemi sono notevoli, più che in altri testi tardoantichi. La Mohrmann ritiene che

> proprio a causa della loro popolarità, ci si permetteva, nella trasmissione di questi testi, ogni specie di libertà: qualcosa si aggiungeva, qualcosa si eliminava, si parafrasava, e persino si combinavano e fondevano opere di autori differenti.[9]

L'Edizione di Butler, *The Lausiac History of Palladius*,[10] date queste difficoltà,

> non ha voluto dare ciò che si chiama un testo definitivo. Tuttavia ci ha fornito un'edizione enormemente progredita, rispetto a quelle precedenti. Si potrebbe dire che è, in un certo senso, un'*editio princeps*. Anche se la sua edizione ha subìto critiche talora severe, i suoi stessi avversari hanno riconosciuto che per il momento essa è il testo migliore di cui disponiamo. Non bisogna d'altronde dimenticare che queste stesse critiche sono state rese possibili grazie al lavoro di dissodamento di Butler. (…) Malgrado queste discussioni, si è d'accordo che allo stato attuale degli studi l'edizione di Butler è il solo testo dell'*Historia Lausiaca* che risponda a esigenze ragionevoli di critica testuale.[11]

Queste difficoltà, già rilevate dalla Mohrmann, sono rese ancor più evidenti se si considera che dei manoscritti che sono alla base dell'Edizione di Butler nessuno è anteriore al decimo secolo: W Oxoniensis (Christ Church) Wake Graecus 67 (decimo secolo). Mentre il manoscritto maggiormente utilizzato da Butler è del quattordicèsimo secolo: P Parisinus Graecus 1628 (secolo quattordicèsimo).

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[7] N.H. Baynes, *Costantino*, in *CAH*[2] 11, 758 (traduzione italiana).
[8] R. Helm (ed.), *Hieronymi Chronicon/Eusebius* (Berlin 1956), 316 F, a–b.
[9] Mohrmann 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), ix.
[10] C. Butler, *The Lausiac History of Palladius* (Cambridge 1898–1904).
[11] Mohrmann 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), x; xi.

Strettamente connesso al problema della tradizione manoscritta è quello della attendibilità storica della *Historia Lausiaca*, sulla quale vi sono opinioni discordanti. Secondo Butler "la sua cronologia sta bene insieme, la sua geografia e la sua topografia sono accurate e minuziose, le esposizioni degli avvenimenti si accordano con la storia accertata e con le condizioni generali del suo tempo. In altre parole, l'*Historia Lausiaca* possiede i segni consueti di un documento autentico e veritiero".[12] Al contrario, Mohrmann ritiene che Palladio "non possiamo giudicarlo come storico, perché non ha voluto fare della storia, né secondo le regole moderne, né secondo le tradizioni degli storici antichi. Egli vuole piuttosto mostrare il valore spirituale della vita del deserto".[13]

Un altro aspetto evidenziato dalla critica storica (Reitzenstein; Bousset) è quello della dipendenza di Palladio dal suo maestro Evagrio Pontico. Il Draguet ha analizzato in parallelo il vocabolario di Evagrio e Palladio, rilevando come molti temi di Evagrio rifluiscano in Palladio.[14] La Mohrmann ritiene che "vi è anche la possibilità che tutti e due attingano alla tradizione dei padri del deserto, che tutti e due, insomma, risalgano ad una stessa fonte".[15]

I motivi ideologici e religiosi della condanna della ricchezza

La *Historia Lausiaca* nomina Giuliano, Costanzo, Teodosio I e Valente, in relazione ad un episodio di Melania Seniore.[16] Non ci sono riferimenti a Teodosio II, (408–450) sotto il quale, secondo la Mohrmann,[17] l'opera sarebbe stata composta. Del tutto assente è anche Costantino. La posizione ideologica della *Historia Lausiaca* nella valutazione del potere imperiale è molto simile a quella delle *Historiae* di Orosio, scritte in Africa, a Cartagine, tra il 415–417: scarsa enfasi su Costantino,[18] condanna di Costanzo, che seguendo le ultime volontà di Costantino,

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[12] Mohrmann 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), xvii.

[13] Mohrmann 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), xvi.

[14] R. Draguet, '*L'Historia Lausiaca* une oeuvre écrite dans l'esprit d'Evagre', *Revue d'Histoire Ecclesiastique* 43 (1947) 5–49, particolarmente 37; 38; 42.

[15] Mohrmann 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), xxiii.

[16] Giuliano: *Historia Lausiaca* 4.4; 45.1; Costanzo: 44.1 e 63.1.3–4; Teodosio I:1.1 e 35.2, Valente: 46.1.6–7.

[17] Mohrmann 2001, op. cit. (n. 1), xiv e nota a 299.

[18] A. Polichetti, *Le Historiae di Orosio e la tradizione imperiale nella "storiografia ecclesiastica" occidentale (311–417 d.C.)* (Napoli 1999), 112 ff.

aveva aderito all'arianesimo e minato l'unità della Chiesa.[19] Esaltazione per Teodosio I, (propagator Ecclesiae) che con l'aiuto di Dio vince il tiranno Eugenio, nella battaglia del monte Frigido.[20] Nella *Historia Lausiaca* Giuliano è considerato un imperatore misero poiché era un persecutore dei cristiani e quando viene diffusa la notizia della sua morte, preannunziata in sogno, Didimo il cieco festeggia con un pranzo.[21] Giuliano è un imperatore dal nome esecrato.[22] Sotto Costanzo gli Ariani congiurarono contro il beato Atanasio, vescovo di Alessandria per mezzo del preposto Eusebio.[23] Palladio afferma di essere giunto per la prima volta ad Alessandria sotto Teodosio I, console per la seconda volta, il *grande imperatore*, che ora si trova con gli angeli, grazie alla fede in Cristo.[24] Teodosio è *beato imperatore*. A lui Giovanni di Licopoli predisse la vittoria contro il tiranno Massimo e contro il tiranno Eugenio.[25]

Numerosi sono i luoghi nella *Historia Lausiaca*, dove si riflette sul buon uso delle ricchezze, più che sulla condanna assoluta e sulla fuga da esse. È condannata la brama infinita di ricchezza e si loda la rinunzia ad ingrossare la ricchezza, diminuendola con la distribuzione ai poveri per il raggiungimento della virtù.[26] Macario condanna la avidità di denaro (filarguría).[27]

Un caso è quello di Panmachio che non si disfece completamente di tutte le ricchezze, ma solo di una parte,[28] lasciando il resto dopo la morte: Panmachio, ex proconsole, ritiratosi dal mondo, disperse una parte del patrimonio mentre era in vita, e il resto lo lasciò ai poveri in atto di morte. Similmente Macario, vicario imperiale, e Costanzio, consigliere dei prefetti d'Italia.[29] Anche Eulogio, studioso formato da una educazione completa sotto l'aspetto culturale, spinto dal *desiderio per l'immortalità*, dispersi tutti i suoi averi, aveva conservato per sè una piccola parte del denaro, non potendo lavorare.[30] Si biasimava chi non avesse mai fatto una donazione come, ad esempio, una vergine di

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[19] Polichetti 1999, op. cit. (n. 11), 168.
[20] Polichetti 1999, op. cit. (n. 11), 174–175.
[21] *Historia Lausiaca* 4.4.25; 4.4.
[22] *Historia Lausiaca* 45.1.7–8.
[23] *Ibidem* 63.1.5–8.
[24] *Ibidem* 1.1.1–3.
[25] *Ibidem* 35.2.13–16.
[26] *Ibidem* Proomion 9.79–83.
[27] *Ibidem* 17.3.24.
[28] *Ibidem* 62.3–4.
[29] *Ibidem* 62.1–8.
[30] *Ibidem* 21.3.17–21.

Alessandria che, *fin troppo colma di ricchezze*, non aveva mai donato un obolo né ad un forestiero, né ad una vergine, né alla Chiesa, né ad un povero.[31] Anche qui la vergine di Alessandria è condannata non perché ricca, ma perché eccessivamente ricca non ha dato nulla di ciò che aveva in più.

Tuttavia vi erano casi più 'estremi' nell'elargizione della ricchezza, il cui scopo non era la redistribuzione più equa della ricchezza, in nome della dignità sociale degli umili, o, in termini moderni, per favorire le loro possibilità nella realizzazione della *humanitas*, ma essa era data per conseguire l'immortalità. Ad Ancira, in Galazia Vero, che era stato comes, e sua moglie Bosporia, *per amore della immortalità* distribuivano le rendite dei loro poderi agli affamati e alle chiese di città e di campagna, sottraendole ai figli, ad eccezione delle figlie sposate. Durante una carestia riportarono all'ortodossia gli eretici, offrendo i loro granai per nutrire i poveri. Per la maggior parte del tempo vivono in campagna e sfuggono la città, temendo che la vita cittadina e la vita di società li distolga dalla fede.[32] Il che ci dà anche una spiegazione 'ideologica' della fuga dalla città durante il tardo impero. Veneria, moglie del comes Vallovico, distribuì i beni e si sottrasse alle ferite che provengono dalla ricchezza materiale. Teodora, moglie di un tribuno, spinse a tal punto la sua rinunzia ai propri beni da dover accettare l'elemosina e morire nel monastero di Esica.[33] La figura del monaco caritatevole, convertitosi dopo aver abbandonato la vita militare, riflette l'ideale monastico: egli assiste ricchi e poveri nelle prigioni e negli ospedali. Nelle grandi città nel portico della chiesa giace una moltitudine di malati che chiede l'elemosina del vitto quotidiano, alcuni sono soli, altri sposati.[34] Il monaco ha vesti e cibo povero e se qualcuno gli regala un libro lo vende. Egli è l'emblema della metamorfosi del mondo antico.[35]

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[31] *Ibidem* 6.1.3–7.
[32] *Ibidem* 66.1.4–7.66.2.
[33] *Ibidem* 41.3.15–20.
[34] *Ibidem* 68.1–2.
[35] *Ibidem* 68.4; S. D'Elia, *Metamorfosi e fine del mondo antico* (Napoli 1999) è il testamento culturale di un Maestro del tardoantico.

L'economia nella Historia Lausiaca

La *Historia Lausiaca* offre numerosi luoghi che si prestano ad una riflessione sull'economia del tardo impero. Essi si riferiscono essenzialmente alla questione dell'attestazione del bimetallismo oro-argento e dell'uso dell'oro per l'acquisto di beni quotidiani, e alla particolarità del mercato nella seconda metà del quarto secolo, nel quale emergono nuovi fattori come la redistribuzione delle ricchezze, compiuta dalle classi alte che avevano aderito al cristianesimo. Il problema di queste testimonianze è dato dalla loro collocazione cronologica, anche se la maggior parte sono da porsi alla seconda metà del quarto secolo, come si evince dai riferimenti a Melania Seniore e all'imperatore Valente.[36] Più difficile da stabilire è la loro attendibilità dal punto di vista quantitativo dei prezzi, come pure il significato da attribuire al termine νόμισμα che spesso è indicato come generica unità monetaria, che a volte si specifica essere in oro, altre volte no. Ma non ci sono evidenze per supporre che essa indicasse il denario di argento. L'argento è indicato in libbre (λιτρῶν) e non in monete.[37]

Il problema del bimetallismo oro-argento

Il presbitero Macario vende per 500 monete delle pietre ad una ricca vergine di Alessandria, dicendo che con la vendita di una sola pietra avrebbe potuto rifarsi dell'intera somma. Una prova dell'esistenza del mercato è nella stima e nel guadagno derivante dalla rivendita. Le ricchezze sono usate per il mantenimento di un ospizio. Quando la vergine chiede il dovuto Macario specifica che il pagamento era stato fatto in oro. Durante il soggiorno di Serapione ad Atene, alcuni filosofi, gli comprano del pane che viene pagato in monete, senza specificare se sono di oro. È anche questa una evidenza della esistenza del mercato in Atene e del fatto che i beni al minuto erano pagati in moneta.[38]

L'eremita Pambo disprezzava l'oro e l'argento. Egli ricevette da Melania una scatola con 300 libbre di argento e diede incarico ad Origene, suo amministratore, di darlo ed amministrarlo a favore di

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[36] *Historia Lausiaca* 46.1.6–7.

[37] Sull'uso dell'argento nella seconda metà del quarto secolo cfr. J.M. Carrié, 'L'Economia e le finanze', in *Storia di Roma III.I: L'età tardoantica* (Torino 1993), 759.

[38] *Historia Lausiaca* 6.5.36–38; 6.8.55–57; 37.7.58–62.

tutti i confratelli della Libia che erano i più poveri, ma non all'Egitto, perché il paese era molto ricco.[39]

Melania la giovane, nipote di Santa Melania, affidò l'oro e l'argento ad un presbitero Paolo, monaco della Dalmazia. Il che significa che esisteva ancora una situazione di bimetallismo oro e argento. Secondo Palladio Melania la giovane mandò in Oriente, per via di mare, in Egitto e in Tebaide 10.000 monete, ad Antiochia e alle regioni dipendenti 10.000, in Palestina 15.000, 10.000 alle chiese delle isole e agli esiliati nelle loro sedi di relegazione, allo stesso modo provvide alle chiese d'Occidente.[40] E liberò gli 8000 schiavi che vollero la libertà.[41] Gli altri che la rifiutarono furono venduti a suo fratello per tre monete ciascuno. Anche qui non si specifica se le monete erano in oro. Inoltre, diede al presbitero Doroteo 500 monete, per distribuirle ai monaci.[42]

Nell'episodio della vergine di Corinto, che viene riferito da Ippolito, morto nel 235, ma che riflette la situazione economica del quarto secolo, il pagamento della ragazza costretta ad essere venduta in un bordello è fatto in oro. Essa doveva guadagnare 3 monete al giorno. Il pagamento per una prestazione è di 5 monete.[43]

Melania Seniore, sotto Valente, vendette i suoi beni ad Alessandria, li convertì in monete d'oro (εἰς Χρυσὸν κατακερματίσασα) e si avviò verso la Nitria per incontrarvi i Padri del deserto; Serapione si vende a dei mimi per convertirli, per 20 monete; anche in questo caso è chiaro che il pagamento è fatto in oro; Il costo per un viaggio per Roma era pagato in oro.[44]

Il quadro offerto da queste testimonianze ci porta alle seguenti considerazioni: (1) I passi qui riportati si riferiscono a situazioni della seconda metà del quarto secolo, ed un riferimento cronologico è dato dall'imperatore Valente, quando Melania Seniore in Alessandria vendette i suoi beni ed ottenne (κατακερματίσασα = muto in moneta piccola) monete d'oro. (2) Esiste ancora il mercato, per quanto concerne la stima del bene in moneta e il guadagno derivante dalla rivendita ad un prezzo maggiore dell'acquisto. Anche l'acquisto del pane ad Atene viene fatto esclusivamente in denaro. (3) È ancora attestato l'uso dell'oro

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[39] *Ibidem* 10.1.4–7; 10.2.12; 10.3.15–19.

[40] *Ibidem* 61.4.28–35.

[41] Sulla attendibilità della cifra cfr. F. De Martino, 'Il colonato tra economia e diritto', in *Storia di Roma III.I: L'età tardoantica* (Torino 1993), 809.

[42] *Ibidem* 61.5.38–41; 58.2.14–17.

[43] *Ibidem* 65.2.14–16; 65.3.26–29.

[44] *Ibidem* 46.2.11–12; 37.2.9–11; 37.4.27–30; 37.9.72–76.

e dell'argento. L'oro viene usato come moneta, l'argento invece viene indicato a peso (libbre) e non come moneta. (4) La maggior parte delle transazioni sul mercato avviene in monete d'oro. Esse vanno dal pagamento del viaggio per mare da Alessandria a Roma, che nell'Editto dei prezzi nel 301, nell'elenco dei noli, è indicato in denarii,[45] alla vendita dei beni di Melania Seniore, alla 'vendita' di Serapione ai mimi, alla vendita della vergine in un bordello.

Il monachesimo e il mercato

La testimonianza di Palladio sui monasteri che egli aveva visitato alla fine del quarto secolo è di estremo interesse in quanto evidenzia il rapporto tra monachesimo e mercato. I monasteri, sia presi singolarmente, che nell'insieme, come quelli ordinati dalla Regola di Pacomio, ospitavano migliaia di persone. Nei monasteri esistevano quasi tutte le professioni e i mestieri necessari alla convivenza civile, compresi i medici. I nuovi adepti, se non avevano già un mestiere dovevano impararlo. Questo non significa che i monasteri fossero 'medievalisticamente' un mondo chiuso ed isolato. Essi dipendevano ed erano ancora in relazione economica con la città, alla quale fornivano una parte dei loro prodotti, in cambio di denaro utilizzato per assistere i religiosi, i malati, i carcerati, i poveri in genere. Ma a volte i monasteri potevano anche dare lavoro a chi in città non ne aveva, come il caso di quel sarto che si era recato incautamente in un convento femminile per cercare lavoro. In questo mondo è centrale l'importanza del lavoro, che deve mettere alla prova l'autonomia materiale del singolo individuo per produrre ciò di cui ha bisogno, il pane in particolare, con le sue stesse mani. È un mondo già più vicino all'*ora et labora* del Medio Evo che al disprezzo per il lavoro manuale tipico della antichità. Il lavoro era ormai uno strumento di redenzione per l'altro, non di individualismo o di orgoglio personale.

Palladio asserisce che nei monasteri intorno ad Alessandria vi erano 2000 uomini. Ad Antinoe, nella Tebaide, intorno alla città, vi erano nei monasteri circa 1200 uomini, che vivevano con il lavoro delle proprie mani e si esercitavano al massimo grado (εἰς ἄκρον ἀσκούμενοι).[46] Altri 5000 uomini vivono sulla montagna della Nitria e posseggono

[45] Polichetti 2001, op. cit. (n. 4), 73.
[46] *Ibidem* 7.1.1–4; 58.1.3–5.

7 forni per il pane, per sé e per altri 600 anacoreti che vivono nel deserto. Sul monte Ferme, in Egitto abitano circa 500 uomini che si dedicano all'ascesi. Sulla montagna della Nitria vi è un albergo dove si accolgono persone, anche per due o tre anni. Essi dopo una settimana sono adibiti al lavoro, in giardino, nel forno per il pane o in cucina. Vi sono anche medici e pasticceri. Il vino viene usato ed è anche venduto. Tutti fabbricano da sé la tela, in modo da essere indipendenti.[47] Il mercante Apollonio, non essendo in grado di imparare un mestiere, né di dedicarsi all'esercizio della scrittura, per restare in convento sul monte della Nitria dovette spendere tutto il suo patrimonio per l'acquisto di medicine per i confratelli.[48] Palladio ci informa dell'organizzazione del convento di Pacomio, che aveva ricevuto la Regola direttamente da un angelo. I monaci, perdendo la loro individualità,venivano divisi in 24 classi corrispondenti alle lettere dell'alfabeto, in relazione ai loro compiti, e soprattutto tenendo conto del loro carattere. I monasteri che avevano aderito alla regola di Pacomio comprendevano nell'insieme 7000 uomini, il solo monastero di Pacomio ospitava 1300 uomini. I monasteri vendevano i loro prodotti alla città di Alessandria e compravano in massa (συνωνήσασθαι) ciò di cui avevano bisogno. Vi sono anche monasteri più piccoli, che ospitano ciascuno 200–300 monaci, che hanno, secondo quanto ha visto Palladio: 15 sarti; 7 fabbri; 4 carpentieri; 12 cammellieri; 15 gualchierai. Essi esercitavano ogni arte e con il superfluo mantenevano i monasteri femminili e le prigioni. Allevavano anche dei maiali, la cui carne veniva venduta e le estremità consumate dai malati e dai vecchi. Altri lavori svolti dai monaci erano: contadino; giardiniere; fabbro; panettiere; falegname; gualchieraio; chi intreccia grossi panieri; conciatore di pelli; calzolaio; calligrafo; chi fa piccoli cestelli.[49] Un sarto si reca incautamente in un convento dove vivevano circa 400 suore, per cercare lavoro, ma viene respinto perché esse già avevano i loro sarti. Si notano nella *Historia Lausiaca* anche le prime asserzioni sul valore del lavoro: Filoromo, viveva solo del pane fatto con le sue stesse mani, compenso delle sue fatiche, senza mai accettare del pane dono di altri. Egli, con il suo lavoro, era riuscito ad elargire agli storpi 250 monete, ricavate dal suo lavoro.[50]

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[47] *Ibidem* 7.2.9–14; 20.1.1–3; 7.4; 7.5.34–36.
[48] *Ibidem* 13.1.1.
[49] *Ibidem* 32.4.36–38; 31.8.65–69; 32.8.71–73; 32.9.75–79; 32.10.84–87; 32.12.
[50] *Ibidem* 33.2.12–16; 45.3.25–30.

Redistribuzione delle grandi ricchezze

Un aspetto caratteristico dell'economia della seconda metà del quarto secolo è la redistribuzione delle grandi ricchezze private delle aristocrazie che avevano aderito al cristianesimo,[51] sia in favore della Chiesa, per mantenere i monasteri, sia per salvare i cittadini dalla morte per fame, durante le periodiche carestie che si verificavano nelle città dell'Impero, come nel caso di Edessa. Il disfarsi delle grandi proprietà non era visto favorevolmente dalla maggior parte dell'aristocrazia senatoria, ma anche in àmbito cristiano, in Palladio i termini (διασκορπίζω = dissipo), (σκορπίζω = disperdo, spargo) hanno un significato negativo. Infatti bisognava dare agli altri solamente ciò che era in più, per salvaguardare l'autonomia economica dell'individuo, e solo in punto di morte era concesso distribuire tutto il patrimonio. È da sottolineare che la motivazione era essenzialmente religiosa e non sociale, per promuovere la *humanitas* del povero. Si donava o per conquistare l'immortalità o, nel caso di Melania Seniore, per timore dell'imminente arrivo dell'anticristo.

Melania la giovane, venduti i possedimenti in Spagna, Aquitania, nella regione di Tarracona e nelle Gallie, mantenne solo quelli in Sicilia, Campania ed Africa che utilizzò per mantenere i monasteri. Paesio ed Isaia, i figli del mercante Spanodromo, alla morte del padre vendettero immobili per 5000 monete; altro ricavarono dalla vendita di vesti e servi dedicandosi alla vita monastica. L'uno disperse tutto il patrimonio tra sedi di eremiti, chiese e prigioni ed avendo imparato il mestiere faceva il fornaio. L'altro, che non aveva disperso il patrimonio, costruito un monastero, accoglieva forestieri, malati, vecchi e poveri. Dopo la loro morte sorse una disputa per decidere chi dei due avesse agito meglio. Essi sono in realtà differenti esempi del "buon uso della ricchezza", secondo l'etica cristiana. Melania Seniore aiutò chiese, monasteri, stranieri e prigionieri. Il denaro le veniva dato dai parenti, dal figlio e dai suoi amministratori. Giunta da Cesarea a Roma ella persuase la nipote Melania la giovane, e il marito a vendere i loro beni, suscitando l'opposizione dei senatori e delle loro mogli. Melania Seniore sosteneva di essersi disfatta dei beni perché sarebbero sopraggiunti i giorni dell'anticristo e non sarebbe più stato possibile godere dei propri averi. Ed

[51] J.M. Blasquez Martinez, 'Problemas econòmicos y sociales en la Vida de Melania la joven, y en la Historia Lausiaca de Palladio', *Memorias de Historia Antigua* 2 (1978), 103–123, particolarmente 116.

avendo venduto tutte le rimanenti proprietà, ricevuto il denaro, giunse a Gerusalemme.[52] Olimpia, figlia del *comes* Seleuco, nipote dell'ex prefetto Ablavio, sposa per pochi giorni di Nebridio, prefetto della città, diede tutti i suoi averi ai poveri, dissipandoli. È evidente la connotazione negativa del termine (διασκορπίσασα = avendo dissipato). Anche Candida, la figlia del generale Traiano, disperse il suo denaro, nutrendosi di una miscela di aceto e pane secco, evitando la carne e mangiando raramente solo pesce e verdure. Anche qui vi è una connotazione negativa (σκορπίζω = disperdo, spargo).[53] Palladio descrive la carestia sorta ad Edessa, che alimentava la speculazione (καπηλεύουσι = traffico, mercanteggio). Efraem, il diacono della chiesa di Edessa, riesce ad ottenere dai ricchi del denaro grazie al quale egli "prestava assistenza agli ammalati, dando sepoltura a quelli che morivano, e prendendosi cura di quelli che avevano una speranza di vita".

Il Diritto nella Historia Lausiaca

Nella *Historia Lausiaca* vi sono alcuni riferimenti alla corruzione della giustizia, molto simili a quelli presenti in Ammiano. Il giudice è corrotto con denaro e per gli imputati non è chiaro il motivo della condanna. Si ricorre a false accuse e all'uso della tortura per dimostrarle. È da notare il caso di Melania la giovane, che quando decide di divorziare dal marito per dedicarsi alla vita ascetica gli dà tutti i suoi i beni. Vediamo in analisi. Evagrio Pontico sogna di subire un processo. La narrazione di Palladio è molto simile alle descrizioni di Ammiano: Evagrio sogna di essere in una *custodia*, incatenato con cerchi e catene di ferro, senza che gli uomini venuti ad arrestarlo definiscano il motivo della condanna. Gli imputati sono sottoposti alla tortura per provare qualche accusa, mentre il magistrato, corrotto con denaro, emette una condanna.[54] Melania la giovane quando decide di divorziare dal marito per dedicarsi alla vita ascetica gli dà tutti i suoi beni, in cambio della libertà di seguire la via religiosa.[55] Nell'episodio della vergine di Corinto, che viene riferito da Ippolito, morto nel 235, il giudice "drizzando le orecchie come un cavallo" accoglie una falsa accusa, e pensa di servirsi della tortura per

[52] *Historia Lausiaca* 61.5.41–44; 14.1.2–5; 14.3–6; 52.2.7–11; 54.5.36–39; 54.6.43–44.
[53] *Ibidem* 56.1; 57.2.12–15; 57.1.7–8.
[54] *Ibidem* 38.4.31–35; 38.5.45–46.
[55] *Ibidem* 61.2.14–18.

ottenere la confessione.[56] Atanasio, vescovo di Alessandria, fu accusato dagli ariani e da Eusebio, ma fuggì per non essere accusato di delitti da un tribunale corrotto.[57]

Ammiano e l'Historia Lausiaca

La *Historia Lausiaca* condivide con Ammiano alcuni motivi della realtà sociale della seconda metà del quarto secolo come la critica alla corruzione dei giudici che per denaro si vendono la causa e l'uso della tortura per dimostrare l'accusa. La *Historia Lausiaca* come Ammiano, conferma l'esistenza del mercato e l'uso della moneta, l'aureo, per l'acquisto dei beni sul mercato oltre il bimetallismo oro e argento, al quale, come è evidente in Ammiano, sotto il regno di Giuliano, si ricorreva in mancanza dell'oro. In Palladio l'argento viene dato non in monete, ma a peso, in libbre. Inoltre anche Palladio, come Ammiano che narra di Antiochia, parla delle carestie che si verificavano nelle città dell'Oriente, ad Edessa, in termini ancor più tragici dicendo con chiarezza che la carestia comportava la morte per fame di molte persone e che essa, come in Ammiano ad Antiochia, alimentava la speculazione economica.[58]

Conclusioni

L'analisi della *Historia Lausiaca*, pur con le perplessità connesse alla tradizione manoscritta e le possibili interpolazioni, tipiche degli autori cristiani postcostantiniani, presenta generalmente un quadro coerente con la situazione storica della seconda metà del quarto secolo, come attesta anche il confronto con Ammiano.

Esaminiamo in sintesi la visione che emerge, considerando soprattutto le trasformazioni economiche e sociali, sotto l'influsso del cristianesimo e i loro effetti sul mercato. Innanzitutto si può rilevare che il mercato era ancora strettamente legato alla moneta, anche per gli scambi al minuto come l'acquisto del pane ad Atene. Non vi sono nell'*Historia*

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[56] G.J.M. Bartelink (ed.), *La Storia Lausiaca* (Milano 2001[6]), 398; *Historia Lausiaca* 65.2.9–10.

[57] *Historia Lausiaca* 63.1.8–10.

[58] Ammiano Marcellino 30.4.21; 24.3.3–5; 14.7.2; *Historia Lausiaca* 40.2.15–16.

Lausiaca evidenze di una regressione all'economia naturale e al baratto, al contrario anche i monasteri sono legati al circuito economico della città, alla quale vendono il loro surplus produttivo, per sostenere i religiosi e i poveri. Non sempre è specificato che la moneta era in oro. Tuttavia il pagamento in oro sembra essere in relazione con prodotti di pregio: pietre preziose, prostitute, mimi, viaggi da Alessandria a Roma.[59] Inoltre è attestata ancora una situazione di bimetallismo oro ed argento. L'argento è indicato in libbre e non in monete. In questo mercato intervengono due fattori che rappresentano una novità assoluta nella storia antica, preludio, sia pur con notevoli differenze, al Medio Evo: il monachesimo e la distribuzione delle grandi ricchezze alla Chiesa e ai poveri da parte della grande aristocrazia divenuta cristiana, il cui esempio più importante e famoso è Melania Seniore.

I monasteri descritti da Palladio ospitano migliaia di persone, che lavorano e producono, sì da essere individualmente indipendenti, in quanto ognuno deve produrre da sè, con le sue stesse mani quanto è necessario alla sua sussistenza materiale. È la scoperta del valore del lavoro, contro il dispregio nel quale esso era stato tenuto nel mondo classico, quale essenziale mezzo di redenzione dell'altro, non alimento all'orgoglio, contro il quale i monaci combattono costantemente, e all'utile personale. Infatti il surplus prodotto viene venduto in città e con il ricavato si aiuta la Chiesa, ma anche si assistono i poveri, gli ammalati, i prigionieri nelle carceri. È, il lavoro, il mezzo per l'edificazione della *Christiana civilitas*. La cultura diventa qualcosa di superfluo, tanto che il monaco caritatevole non esita a vendere i libri che gli vengono regalati per aiutare materialmente gli altri. I monasteri vivono in relazione economica con la città, e vi è anche il caso di un sarto che, non trovando lavoro in città, si introduce incautamente in un convento femminile per chiedere lavoro. È evidente, in questo episodio, la crisi produttiva della città, testimoniata dai poveri che chiedono l'elemosina davanti alle chiese e dalla carestia di Edessa, dove molti muoiono per fame. Un altro evidente effetto sul mercato è lo spostamento di popolazione verso i monasteri. Le cifre fornite da Palladio, se corrette, indicano per i monasteri che avevano aderito alla Regola di Pacomio 7000 monaci. Il solo monastero di Pacomio ne ospitava 1300. Il monastero è dunque un'ampia realtà produttiva, in relazione con la città e il mercato, sul quale vende il surplus, il cui fine dal punto di vista storico è nuovo: si

[59] *Historia Lausiaca* 6.8.55–57; 65.3.26–29; 37.2.9–11; 37.9.72–76.

celebra il lavoro, non come strumento di arricchimento personale ma come mezzo di redenzione dell'altro, il povero, l'ammalato, il carcerato. A motivare sia la scelta monastica che l'azione redentiva assegnata al lavoro è un fattore eminentemente religioso e non sociale, il desiderio di immortalità. Non è in nome della giustizia sociale, intesa in senso moderno, che si redime l'altro, valorizzando la sua *humanitas* con la liberazione dai vincoli della necessità, ma per la personale conquista della immortalità, legata alla fede cristiana. Ed è per questo che nobildonne come Melania Seniore vendono le proprietà o elargiscono le rendite di queste per aiutare chiese, monasteri, stranieri e prigionieri. Inoltre è il timore dell'imminente arrivo dell'anticristo ad accelerare queste scelte. In genere si preferiva che la elargizione della ricchezza avvenisse per metà quando si era in vita, per non compromettere la sopravvivenza sociale della persona, e il resto dato in eredità dopo la morte. La totale elargizione e dispersione delle ricchezze, prima di morire è condannata. Si consiglia di dare la parte in più del proprio patrimonio, infatti non si condanna la ricchezza in sé ma il fatto che non si elargisca la parte in più e vi sia l'attaccamento al denaro.

A questo punto possiamo porci la domanda fino a che punto è la nuova religione ad influire sull'economia e il mercato o al contrario, quanto la crisi dell'economia del quarto secolo favorisce la scelta del monachesimo e della elargizione della ricchezza? È forse una domanda troppo grande da porre a Palladio ma cerchiamo di fare il punto. Palladio dà un quadro sociale variegato dal punto di vista economico. C'è innanzitutto la crisi della città, come ci ricordano l'episodio della carestia di Edessa, e in Galazia e del sarto che si reca fino in convento per trovare lavoro. Inoltre ad Alessandria e nelle grandi città una moltitudine di malati chiedono l'elemosina per il vitto quotidiano. In antitesi a questa realtà sociale precaria fino alla morte per fame – cosa che Palladio, a differenza di Ammiano dice esplicitamente – vi sono le grandi ricchezze individuali, sia mobili (oro e argento) che immobili, grandi proprietà fondiarie che producono reddito, come nel caso di Melania Seniore. Palladio non dà indicazioni sulle cause della povertà cittadina, ma non manca di rilevare a proposito della carestia ad Edessa-come fa Ammiano per Antiochia – che a questa si accompagnava la speculazione.

In genere i pagamenti sono fatti in oro, mentre l'argento si usa in libbre, a peso e non come monete, probabilmente come alternativa all'oro quando esso mancava, come rileva Ammiano a proposito del regno di Giuliano. Un caso permette di fare un confronto con Ammiano,

il quale dà il prezzo di un mimo che era stato donato a Giuliano, un ragazzo muto stimato 3 monete d'oro.[60] Serapione nella *Historia Lausiaca* si vende a dei mimi per convertirli per 20 aurei.[61] È troppo poco per dimostrare un aumento dei prezzi, viste tutte le possibili differenze tra i due 'beni'.

Palladio evidenzia un contrasto tra la miseria esistente in città e la sovrabbondante ricchezza delle proprietà fondiarie delle aristocrazie, ma non dà informazioni per spiegare la causa della miseria cittadina. Su questo contesto economico si innesta la trasformazione operata dal cristianesimo dal basso e dall'alto della piramide sociale tardoantica, il cui fine è e resta religioso, non sociale in senso moderno. La struttura economica del monachesimo, come abbiamo visto, costituiva una alternativa individuale alla crisi della città, e non è un caso che una parte di quanti si danno alla vita monastica provengono dal commercio o hanno un mestiere, o hanno ricchezze se non sono in grado di esercitare un mestiere. Infatti, in genere, non si parla di contadini che lasciano i campi per il monastero. È probabile che la crisi, intesa come diminuzione del reddito e sfiducia verso i nuovi investimenti, determinata dalle difficoltà storiche e politiche (invasioni barbariche, crisi politiche e sociali) agevoli il distacco dalle ricchezze, elargite alla Chiesa e ai poveri, anche se non si approvavano quei casi estremi che distruggevano le possibilità di sopravvivenza sociale dei singoli, e dei loro contesti economici. Resta ancora oscuro a chi venivano vendute queste grandi proprietà, in cambio dell'oro.

Vediamo ora quale è stata la novità del cristianesimo in quell'economia descritta da Palladio: (1) Innanzitutto con il monachesimo si sposta una parte della produzione lontano dalla città, limitando il mercato cittadino, che appare già in crisi. (2) Il monachesimo non interrompe il rapporto con il mercato cittadino al quale vende una parte dei beni prodotti ed acquista quelli mancanti. (3) Il monachesimo sviluppa l'indipendenza dell'individuo attraverso il lavoro individuale finalizzato alla redenzione dell'altro, malato, povero, straniero, prigioniero, ma condanna l'amore per il denaro (filarguría), che determina l'accumulazione e l'uso del capitale. (4) La redistribuzione delle grandi ricchezze, motivata da fattori religiosi, accelera la crisi sociale ed economica, ma attenua gli effetti della miseria e delle carestie che provocavano la

[60] Ammiano Marcellino 24.3.3–5; 24.4.26.6.
[61] *Historia Lausiaca* 37.2.9–11; 37.4.27–30.

morte per fame dei cittadini. Una parte della ricchezza elargita veniva utilizzata per la costruzione di chiese e monasteri, il che poteva avere un momentaneo effetto sulla circolazione monetaria, ma in ogni caso la scelta dell'investimento era univoca e su pochi settori, lasciando fuori importanti campi di investimento dai quali si poteva ricavare un reddito, come ad esempio l'agricoltura e soprattutto il commercio. Ed è proprio la scelta univoca di questo flusso di capitale che allargherà sempre di più il divario tra chi è dentro il circuito sociale ed economico della Chiesa e chi è fuori, tra il monaco e il colono.

Università del Molise, Campobasso, dicembre 2006

PHILOSOPHEN ZWISCHEN KAISERZEIT UND SPÄTANTIKE DAS 3. JAHRHUNDERT N. CHR.

Johannes Hahn

Die Reichshauptstadt Rom beherbergte in den beiden ersten Jahrzehnten des 3. Jahrhunderts einen wohl einmaligen Zirkel von Intellektuellen: Mathematiker (*geométrai*), Philosophen und Literaten hatte Iulia Domna, die Gattin des Septimius Severus am Hofe um sich geschart.[1] Der Kaiserin verdanken wir auch den Anstoß zu einer erhalten gebliebenen, kultur- und philosophiegeschichtlich bedeutsamen Schrift aus diesem Kreis: Nach ihrem Tod 217 verfaßte der Sophist und Literat Philostrat die große Lebensbeschreibung des ‚Philosophen' Apollonios von Tyana, eines Charismatikers, Wundertäters und Pythagoreers des 1. Jahrhunderts. Diese Schrift gestattet bemerkenswerte Einsichten in das vibrierende kulturelle und spirituelle Leben im Osten des kaiserzeitlichen Imperiums und spiegelt die außerordentliche Wertschätzung von Weisen vom Schlage eines Apollonius in der Gesellschaft der Zeit.[2] Im Jahre 237/238 n.Chr. dedizierte derselbe Philostrat dann seine zweite große kulturhistorisch wichtige Schrift, die heute so benannten *Vitae Sophistarum*, dem (wenige Monate) späteren Kaiser Gordian I. – auch diese ein Dokument des regen intellektuellen Lebens, nun der hohen Kaiserzeit.[3]

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[1] Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 1.3 und *Vitae Sophistarum* p. 622. Zum Kreis der Iulia Domna siehe grundlegend G.W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman World* (Oxford 1969), 101–109; weniger befriedigend ist A.R. Birley, *Septimius Severus. The African Emperor* (New Haven/London 1995), 141 f., 168. Beachte nun auch P. Robiano, s.v. Julia Domna, in R. Goulet (ed.), *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques* III (2000), 954–960, hier 957 ff.

[2] Zur Person und Biographie des jüngeren Philostrats wie auch zur Chronologie seines Oeuvres siehe Bowersock 1969, a.a.O. (Anm. 1), 1–16 und J.-J. Flintermann, *Power, Paideia & Pythagoreanism. Greek Identity, Conceptions of the Relationship between Philosophers and Monarchs and Political Ideas in Philostratus' Life of Apollonius* (Amsterdam 1995), 15 ff., besonders 22 ff.

[3] Ich folge hierbei der ingeniösen Argumentation von I. Avotins, 'The Date and Recipient of the *Vitae Sophistarum* of Philostratus', *Hermes* 106 (1978), 242–247. Siehe auch den knappen Abriß des Argumentationsganges und der zugrundeliegenden Quellen bei Flintermann 1995, a.a.O. (Anm. 2), 25 ff. Außer Zweifel steht aus prosopographischen Gründen, dass die Schrift erst nach dem Jahr 232 entstanden sein kann; Flintermann 1995, a.a.O. (Anm. 2), 27.

Dieser Biograph der großen griechischen Sophisten und Philosophen des 1. bis frühen 3. Jahrhunderts, der erst unter Philippus Arabs (244–249) verstarb,[4] dürfte noch jenen Intellektuellen kennengelernt haben, der im Jahre 243 nach Rom und an den Hof des Kaisers Gordian III. gelangte: Plotin, den knapp 40jährigen Philosophen und späteren Begründer der neuplatonischen Schule.[5]

Diese beiden griechischen Intellektuellen – obwohl nach Interessen und Leistung kaum vergleichbar und zudem altersmäßig durch eine Generation getrennt – markieren einen fundamentalen kulturgeschichtlichen Einschnitt. Ja, in kaum zu übersehender Art und Weise stehen sie – der eine als Chronist, der andere als innovativer Denker – sogar für den tiefgreifenden Wandel philosophischer Existenz, der sich unter den gesellschaftlichen und politischen Bedingungen des 3. Jahrhunderts vollzog oder vollendete. Diesen Wandel, der zugleich philosophiegeschichtlich von erheblicher Tragweite ist, möchte ich in einigen Aspekten hier zu fassen versuchen.

Das Oeuvre Philostrats, des Chronisten der berühmtesten und einflussreichsten Vertreter des kulturellen Lebens des hohen Prinzipats,[6] bietet hierfür einen materialreichen Ausgangspunkt, die biographisch nur schmale Überlieferung zu Plotin und einzelne spätere Texte hingegen deutliche Hinweise auf die nun gänzlich anderen Rahmenbedingungen und Ziele philosophischer Reflexion und Gemeinschaft. Dass dabei verschiedene relevante Fragen im folgenden um der Transparenz des übergreifenden Arguments willen übergangen werden müssen, sei vorab angemerkt.

Einen Aspekt der Entwicklung vermag dabei eine Bemerkung des Philologen und Platonikers Longinus (210–273) schlaglichtartig zu erhellen.

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[4] Suda Φ 421.

[5] Die Literatur zu Plotin und seiner Bedeutung ist unüberschaubar; einen ausgezeichneten Einstieg zu zahlreichen Aspekten erlaubt L.-P. Gerson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus* (Cambridge 1996). Zur Biographie und Chronologie siehe zudem J.-L. Brisson, 'Plotin, une biographie', in L. Brisson u.a. (eds.), *Porphyre, La vie de Plotin*, II (Paris 1992). Schlüsselhaft für die erstmalige Begegnung und ebenso für die weitere Beschäftigung des Verfassers mit Plotin war allerdings das wichtige Buch von L. de Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* (Leiden 1976), und hier die Abschnitte über Gallienus und Plotin 168 ff. und 185 ff.

[6] G. Anderson, *Philostratos. Biography and "Belles Lettres" in the Third Century A.D.* (London 1986); S. Swain, 'The Reliability of Philostratos' Lives of the Sophists', *Classical Antiquity* 10 (1991), 148–163 sowie S. Rothe, *Kommentar zu ausgewählten Sophistenviten des Philostratos* (Heidelberg 1989), und S. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire. Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World, A.D. 50–250* (Oxford 1996), 380–400.

Dieser, einer der führenden Intellektuellen seiner Zeit und Lehrer des Neuplatonikers Porphyrios in Athen, zeichnete, als er in reifem Alter auf das Schulleben seiner eigenen Studienzeit zurückblickt, ein düsteres Bild der Situation der zeitgenössischen Philosophie:

> In meiner Zeit (…) hat es viele Philosophen gegeben, insbesondere in den Anfängen meiner Jugend. Dies sage ich deshalb, weil heutzutage ein solcher Mangel an dieser Sache herrscht. Als ich dagegen noch ein junger Mann war, gab es nicht wenige, die den Studien der Philosophie vorstanden.[7]

Man sollte dieser rückwärtig verklärenden Perspektive auf den Schulbetrieb des 2. Viertels des 3. Jahrhunderts nicht *a priori* einen zu hohen Aussagewert zuschreiben. Immerhin stellt sie mit ihren im Anschluß an das Zitat gebotenen detaillierten Angaben zu den verschiedenen Philosophenschulen und ihren Vertretern aber das letzte ausführliche Zeugnis zu Philosophen der ausgehenden Kaiserzeit dar.[8] Eusebius jedenfalls nennt in seiner wenige Jahrzehnte später verfassten Chronik für das 3. Jahrhundert keinen einzigen Philosophen mehr.[9]

Philostrat, eine Generation früher, verzeichnete in seinen Schriften hingegen noch eine beispiellose Blüte des Kulturbetriebs und hier der Philosophie im besonderen. Seinen philosophischen Wundertäter Apollonios ließ er im historischen Rückblick in einer von hohem Interesse für Philosophen jeder Couleur bestimmten Umwelt agieren – versehen mit bunt schillernden Fähigkeiten, die seinen Zeitgenossen allesamt als philosophisch respektabel oder doch so subsumierbar erschienen. Die Faszination, die weise Männer in der Öffentlichkeit des

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[7] Zitiert bei Porphyrios, *Vita Plotini* 20.9 f. (= 104 in der Ausgabe von R. Harder, *Plotins Schriften. Band 5c. Porphyrios. Über Plotins Leben und über die Ordnung seiner Schriften*. Hamburg 1958).

[8] Das Prooemium Longins zu seinem (verlorenen) Werk *Perì télous* bietet einen ausführlichen historischen Überblick über die gesamte zeitgenössische Philosophie und verortet hierin auch eingehend Plotin. Zur zitierten Stelle, dem folgenden historischen Abriß sowie dem weiterem Zusammenhang vgl. H. Dörrie und M. Baltes, *Der Platonismus in der Antike III: Der Platonismus im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert nach Christus* (Stuttgart und Bad Cannstatt 1993), * 74 mit 140–144 und I. Männlein-Robert, *Longin, Philologe und Philosoph. Eine Interpretation der erhaltenen Zeugnisse*. Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 143 (München und Leipzig 2001), 173–177. Zur Person des Longin beachte zudem Eunapius, *Vitae Sophistarum* 4.1–6 [456] (Giangrande), und Porphyrios, *Fragmenta* 408–410 (= Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 10.3.1–25 Mras I) sowie Männlein-Robert, 26 ff.

[9] Die Aussagekraft der inschriftlichen Überlieferung, die für die 1. Hälfte des 3. Jahrhunderts deutlich zurückgeht, in der 2. Hälfte dann kaum noch Belege bietet, sollte allerdings (gegen Dörrie und Baltes 1993, a.a.O (Anm. 8), 141) nicht überbewertet werden, denn dasselbe Bild bietet unsere epigraphische Überlieferung insgesamt.

2. Jahrhunderts ausstrahlten, wird in nicht geringerem Maße etwa in den Reden Dions von Prusa oder selbst in den Satiren Lukians, aber nicht weniger in Bemerkungen römischer Aristokraten wie Plinius der Jüngere deutlich.[10]

Nun ist die Erscheinung des Philosophen und sein Auftreten in der Gesellschaft kein ausschließliches Kennzeichen der Prinzipatszeit. Zahlreiche Züge finden sich bereits in hellenistischer Zeit, in der auch die dogmatischen Voraussetzungen entwickelt wurden – insbesondere die dezidierte Hinwendung zu ethischen Fragen –, die dann in der frühen und hohen Kaiserzeit das Bild des Philosophen so markant dominierten.[11] Doch ist es erst der Wandel der gesellschaftlichen und politischen Verhältnisse im Mittelmeerraum, der sich mit der Entstehung und dem Ausbau des Imperium Romanum verbindet, der dem Philosophen als einer Figur des öffentlichen Lebens, in Kultur, Gesellschaft und Politik, im römischen Reich einen umfassenden Wirkungsraum und eine breite Publizität verschafft, die in den Jahrhunderten vorher nicht gegeben waren.[12]

Jene bemerkenswerte öffentliche Resonanz und Popularität, die Philosophen und Philosophie im römischen Reich des 1. bis frühen 3. Jahrhunderts nach Ausweis unserer Quellen dann genossen, ist wiederum nur verständlich vor dem Hintergrund der erstaunlichen Popularisierung der nun vermittelten und verkörperten Inhalte. Zunächst begünstigte die dynamische Entwicklung der Bildungsvorstellungen, vor allem die rasante Verbreitung griechischer Bildung und Bildungsvermittler im Imperium Romanum in diesem Zeitraum, eine weite Rezeption philosophischen Bildungsgutes. Doch auch über die Grenzen der Oberschicht hinaus kam es zu einer Verbreitung philosophischer Vorstellungen – und sei es auch in einfachster Form. Origines etwa unterstreicht die Breitenwirkung des Epiktets und seiner Lehre; diese würde – im Gegensatz zu der Platons und dessen Schriften – auch vom einfachen Volk

[10] Zur markanten Selbststilisierung zeitgenössischer Philosophen, den entsprechenden Erwartungen ihres Umfeldes und der Rezeption philosophischen Auftretens siehe J. Hahn, *Der Philosoph und die Gesellschaft. Selbstverständnis, öffentliches Auftreten und populäre Erwartungen in der hohen Kaiserzeit* (Stuttgart 1989), 33 ff. und passim.

[11] Siehe zu vielen Aspekten nun die ausgezeichnete Monographie von M. Haake, *Der Philosoph in der Stadt. Untersuchungen zur öffentlichen Rede über Philosophen und Philosophie in den hellenistischen Poleis* (München 2006), sowie grundlegend M. Erler et al. (eds.), *Die hellenistische Philosophie* (Basel 1994).

[12] Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), passim.

verstanden.[13] Es ist aber vor allem die Blüte der kynischen Philosophie und ihrer Vertreter, der Wander- und Bettelphilosophen, in der hohen Kaiserzeit, welche die Popularisierung philosophischer Begriffe und ethischer Konzepte in weiten Teilen der Bevölkerung, auch außerhalb der städtischen Zentren, dokumentiert.[14]

In der Tat beruhte die außerordentliche und in breiten Bevölkerungskreisen empfundene Attraktivität philosophischer Bildung und Kompetenz im prinzipatszeitlichen Imperium in erster Linie auf ihrer – ob zu Recht oder nicht, kann dahingestellt bleiben – praktischen Nutzbarkeit: als Leitlinie rechter Lebensführung, als Schatz anerkannter politischer Maximen und *exempla*, als Methode intellektueller Schulung, und als unstrittiges gesellschaftliches Distinktionsmerkmal traditioneller Eliten und zugleich geschätztes Medium kultivierten Austausches unter ihren Mitgliedern.

Der beispiellose Erfolg der Philosophie als allseits respektierte Lehrerin und Mittlerin sittlicher Lebensweise, als höchste Form kultureller Betätigung und Maßstab für jegliche Form intellektueller Tätigkeit, schlug sich im gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Leben in markanter Weise nieder: als Ehrentitel *philósophos* für verdienstvolle Persönlichkeiten – so in vielen Inschriften – und als ultimativer Bezugsrahmen für andere Bildungsfächer und Spezialdisziplinen.[15] Versetzte etwa Vitruv mit der Auflistung der umfassenden, für den wahren Architekten nötigen wissenschaftlichen Kenntnisse (der sogar fleißig Philosophen gehört haben solle!) seine Disziplin nahezu an die Seite der Philosophie,[16] so propagierte Galen die untrennbare Verbindung der Medizin mit der Philosophie.[17] Für die Mathematik, Astronomie und Geographie der Kaiserzeit wiederum ist die enge Bindung an die Philosophie erst

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[13] Origines, *Contra Celsum* 6.2.

[14] D. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism. From Diogenes to the 6th Century A.D.* (London 1937), 143 ff. K. Döring, *Exemplum Socratis. Studien zur Sokratesnachwirkung in der kynisch-stoischen Popularphilosophie der frühen Kaiserzeit und im frühen Christentum* (Wiesbaden 1979); Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 172 ff.

[15] Hierzu Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 161 ff.

[16] Vitruvius, *De Architectura* 1.2 f., besonders 7. Umfassend und scharfsinnig zu dem hier behandelten Aspekt A. Dihle, 'Philosophie – Fachwissenschaft – Allgemeinbildung', in H. Flashar und O. Gigon (eds.), *Aspects de la philosophie hellénistique* (Vandoeuvres/Genèves 1986), 185–223. Siehe auch K. Sallmann, 'Bildungsvorgaben des Fachschriftstellers. Bemerkungen zur Pädagogik Vitruvs', in H. Knell und B. Wesenberg (eds.), *Vitruv-Kolloquium des Deutschen Archäologen-Verbandes e.V., durchgeführt an der Technischen Hochschule Darmstadt, 17. bis 18. Juni 1982* (Darmstadt 1984), 11–26.

[17] Programmatisch in seiner Schrift "Dass der beste Arzt Philosoph sein muß." Celsus, *prooemium* 8 vertritt sogar die Auffassung, dass die Philosophie bis in die Zeit

jüngst wieder herausgearbeitet worden.[18] Und selbst ein praktizierender Traumdeuter wie Artemidor meinte, seine Disziplin, die Oneirokritik, noch in die Nähe dieser Königsdisziplin rücken zu müssen.[19]

Das sprunghaft gestiegene öffentliche, ja staatliche Interesse an der Philosophie und ihrer Lehre ist allerdings vor allem im Bildungssektor faßbar – und hier wesentlich auch an die Schwester- und Konkurrenzdisziplin der Rhetorik geknüpft. Die Einbeziehung von Philosophen in den Kreis der staatlich begünstigten Lehrer sowie Ärzte im Rahmen der öffentlichen Förderung der höheren Studien in den Städten des Reiches datiert spätestens in die Antoninenzeit, wenn nicht bereits unter Vespasian, dessen entsprechendes Dekret von 74 n. Chr. allerdings an der entscheidenden Stelle unvollständig ist.[20] Der grundsätzliche Anspruch von Philosophen auf Immunität von öffentlichen Leistungen – sofern sie als Lehrer tätig waren – stand von nun an nicht mehr zur Debatte.

Der öffentliche Vorrang der Rhetorik und ihres Unterrichtes vor dem der Philosophie wird im Umstand deutlich, dass Rhetoriklehrer schon weit früher von Lasten freigestellt wurden bzw. werden konnten.[21] Und auch die Einrichtung öffentlich besoldeter Lehrstühle für griechische und lateinische Redekunst war selbstverständlich vorgängig. Sie erfolgte unter Vespasian, während erst Mark Aurel auch vier philosophische Lehrstühle, allerdings nur in Athen, einrichtete und so nun auch *den* Abschnitt der höheren Bildung mit staatlich finanzierten Lehrstühlen unterstützte, der als Abschluß eines langen, kostspieligen Bildungsganges

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des Hippokrates hinein Bestandteil der Philosophie gewesen sei; erst dieser Arzt…*a studio sapientiae disciplinam hanc separavit.*

[18] L.C. Taub, *Ptolemy's Universe. The Natural, Philosophical and Ethical Foundations of Ptolemy's Astronomy* (Chicago and La Salle, Ill. 1993); J. Mansfeld, *Prolegomena mathematica. From Apollonius of Perga to the Late Neoplatonists* (Leiden u.a. 1998). Vgl. I. Hadot, ‚Der philosophische Unterrichtsbetrieb in der römischen Kaiserzeit', *Rheinisches Museum* 146 (2003), 56 ff.

[19] Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica*, Praefatio (mit Plädoyer für einen Status der Traumdeutung als *téchnê*). Zu analogen Äußerungen aus der römischen Jurisprudenz siehe unten.

[20] R. Herzog, *Urkunden zur Hochschulpolitik der römischen Kaiser* (Berlin 1935), XXXII, 7. 19 f.; Bowersock 1969, a.a.O. (Anm. 1), 32; P. Steinmetz, *Untersuchungen zur römischen Literatur des zweiten Jahrhunderts nach Christi Geburt* (Wiesbaden 1982), 81 ff. und Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 101 ff. gehen davon aus, dass die Philosophen hier ausgeschlossen waren; I. Hadot, *Arts libéraux et philosophie dans la pensée antique* (Paris 1984), 31 plädiert für ihre Einbeziehung in die kaiserlichen Vergünstigungen. Unstrittig ist die Förderung in antoninischer Zeit; siehe zusammenfassend Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 104 ff., und Dörrie und Baltes 1993, a.a.O. (Anm. 8), 125 ff.

[21] Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 104 mit Anm. 18.

gewählt werden konnte, für eine öffentliche Laufbahn aber keinesfalls zwingend erforderlich war.[22]

Konservative Römer betrachteten die Philosophie als genuin griechische Bildungsdisziplin mit Misstrauen und Distanz. Doch ihr Nutzen bei vorsichtiger und gezielter Auswahl der Inhalte konnte eben auch praktischen Zwecken dienen. So empfahl sogar Tacitus ihre selektive Rezeption zur Steigerung der Wirksamkeit der eigenen Rhetorik[23] – im Kontext einer psychologischen Analyse verschiedener Zuhörertypen erklärt er:

> Bei Menschen, denen eine knappe, gebündelte und die einzelnen Beweise sofort zu einer Schlußfolgerung vereinigende rednerische Darlegungsweise mehr Vertrauen einflößt, wird es von Vorteil sein, sich mit der Dialektik beschäftigt zu haben. Andere Leute erfreut mehr eine weitläufige, gleichmäßige, aus dem gesunden Menschenverstand entwickelte Darstellung: Um solche Zuhörer zu beeindrucken, wird man von den Peripatetikern passende, für jede Disputation geeignete vorgeformte Floskeln leihen. Die Akademiker werden uns den Kampfesmut borgen, Platon die Erhabenheit, Xenophon die Anmut. Ja, dem Redner wird es selbst nicht fremd sein, sogar einige ehrenhafte Aussagen des Epikur und des Metrodor anzunehmen und sie, wo die Sache es verlangt, in Anwendung bringen.[24]

Die Philosophie als Steinbruch für öffentliche Reden oder doch als Beitrag zur Ausbildung des besten Redners erweist sich als ein Leitmotiv der römischen Aneignung dieser Disziplin. Im 2. Jahrhundert mehren sich die Klagen renommierter philosophischer Lehrer, dass ihre

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[22] J.H. Oliver, 'Marcus Aurelius and the Philosophical Schools at Athens', *American Journal of Philology* 102 (1981), 213–225; Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 119 f., 126–128; J.H.W. Walden, *The Universities of Ancient Greece* (London 1912), 93 f., 134–138; J.P. Lynch, *Aristotle's School. A Study of a Greek Educational Institution* (Berkeley u.a. 1972), 169–177; Dörrie und Baltes 1993 a.a.O. (Anm. 8), 135–139.

[23] Fronto, der Lehrer Mark Aurels, warb gegenüber seinem zögerlichen kaiserlichen Schüler in seinen Briefen *De eloquentia* in ganz ähnlicher Weise für die Rhetorik als praktische Philosophie und propagierte die Unentbehrlichkeit dieser Fertigkeit für den Philosophen: *dabit philosophia quod dicas, dabit eloquentia quomodo dicas* – und bestimmt die *eloquentia* als *comes philosophiae* (*De eloquentia* 1.18 [= vol. 2, p. 70 der Loeb Ausgabe von Haines = p. 141 der Ausgabe von Van den Hout; M.P.J. van den Hout, *M.Cornelii Frontonis Epistulae* (Leiden, 1954)]). Hierzu E. Champlin, *Fronto and Antonine Rome* (Cambridge and London 1980), 29 ff., und – weniger überzeugend – C.T. Kasulke, *Fronto, Marc Aurel und kein Konflikt zwischen Rhetorik und Philosophie im 2. Jh. n. Chr.* (München 2005).

[24] Tacitus, *Dialogus de oratoribus* 31: *sunt apud quos adstrictum et collectum et singula statim argumenta concludens dicendi genus plus fidei meretur: apud hos dedisse operam dialecticae proficiet. Alios fusa et aequalis et ex communibus ducta sensibus oratio magis delectat: ad hos permovendos mutuabimur a Peripateticis aptos et in omnem disputationem paratos iam locos. dabunt Academici pugnacitatem, Plato altitudinem, Xenophon iucunditatem; ne Epicuri quidem et Metrodori honestas quasdam exclamationes adsumere iisque, prout res poscit, uti alienum erit oratori.*

hochgestellten Schüler allein an der Diskussion der rhetorischen Stilmittel, etwa in platonischen Dialogen, interessiert seien, philosophische Probleme aber ignorierten, mithin Platon-Lektüre *non vitae ornandae sed linguae orationisque comendae gratia* betrieben.[25] Doch selbst diese Lehrer kamen nicht umhin, mit der sprachlichen und stilistischen Eleganz ihrer Klassiker zu werben, um hochgestellte Römer für die Philosophie zu begeistern.[26]

Eine Rhetorisierung der Philosophie und ihrer Gegenstände, jedenfalls der öffentlich wahrgenommenen, ist so machtvoller Trend der Zeit. Öffentliche Auftritte von Philosophen waren nun zuweilen nicht mehr von denen anderer Intellektueller zu unterscheiden. Die *Dialexeis* des Maximus von Tyros, der Ende des 2. Jahrhunderts in Rom reüssierte, behandeln – als intellektuelle Häppchen von maximal 25 Minuten Länge – etwa die Frage, ob Homer als Gründer einer philosophischen Schule angesehen werden dürfte, traktieren die ‚Erotik' des Sokrates, oder widmen sich der Frage, wie Sokrates sich in seinem Prozeß hätte erfolgreicher verteidigen können. Diese Stücke erinnern zuallererst an Suasorien der Rhetorenschule. Ausdrücklich heißt Maximus Liebhaber der Rhetorik, der Dichtung und der Staatskunst unter seinen Zuhörer willkommen und verheißt ihnen reichen Gewinn.[27] Platonisches, Stoisches, Peripatetisches, Kynisches – alles findet sich in den kunstvoll literarisch und stilistisch ausgestalteten Vorträgen des Maximus: Als rechter Salon- oder besser Konzertphilosoph kommt er vor allem dem Geschmack seiner Zuhörer entgegen. Die Beliebigkeit der Gegenstände und Argumente ist so das eigentliche Kennzeichen dieses Philosophen; ihn als Eklektiker zu bezeichnen, hieße ihn fast schon zu ernst zu nehmen.

Popularisierung philosophischen Gedankengutes im skizzierten Sinne bedeutet allerdings die Aufgabe von Profil, von genuinen Herangehensweisen und vor allem den Verlust von Gegenständen an andere

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[25] Gellius 1.9.10. Vgl. auch die ebenso humorvolle wie kritische Anrede seines Schülers Gellius als *rhetorisce* durch den Platoniker Taurus; 17.20.4. Hierzu M.-L. Lakmann, *Der Platoniker Tauros in der Darstellung des Aulus Gellius* (Leiden 1995).

[26] So der Platoniker Taurus gegenüber Aulus Gellius (Gellius 1.9.10); vgl. Anm. 25.

[27] Maximus Tyrius, *Dialexeis* 1.7e. Einen guten Überblick über die Themen dieses Konzertredners bietet die Übersicht bei J. Campos Daroca und F. Egea Tsibidou, s.v. Maxime de Tyros, in R. Goulet (ed.), *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques* IV (Paris 2005), 324–348, hier 327 ff. Zu Autor und Werk siehe auch M. Szarmach, *Maximos von Tyros. Eine literarische Monographie* (Torún 1985); M.B. Trapp, *Maximus of Tyre: The Philosophical Orations* (Oxford 1997), Introduction, sowie Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 92–98.

Disziplinen und ihre Vertreter. Philosophen, Sophisten, Iatrosophisten, Iatrophilosophen u.a. bevölkern so die Kulturwelt des ausgehenden 2. Jahrhunderts, Intellektuelle der Zeit dilettieren in der Abfassung von Traktaten aller denkbaren Disziplinen, Polymathie macht auch vor der Philosophie nicht halt.[28]

Philostrats Sammlung von Biographien führender Vertreter des Bildungs- und Kulturbetriebs der hohen Kaiserzeit greift auf diese zeitgenössischen Entwicklungen zurück. Philostrats primäres Interesse an den von ihm geschilderten Intellektuellen ist offensichtlich: Es geht ihm um Männer, die sich durch ihre Fähigkeit zur überzeugenden und faszinierenden öffentlichen Rede auszeichnen. Diese begnadeten Redner repräsentieren für ihn die Spitze der *pepaideuómenoi*, der gebildeten Eliten vor allem der städtischen Oberschichten des griechischen Ostens, die ihre soziale und politische Exklusivität entscheidend über die Aneignung, Beherrschung und stete glanzvolle Praxis der anspruchsvollsten Bildungsdisziplinen, vor allem Rhetorik und Philosophie, in öffentlichen Auftritten ihrer Umgebung unter Beweis stellten.[29]

Man mag, wie Brancacci dies getan hat, bei Philostrat Umrisse einer Theorie erkennen, die zeitgenössische philosophische, rhetorische und politische Konzepte zu verbinden sucht, und diesem Modell vielleicht sogar entsprechende Lehrinhalte kaiserzeitlicher Philosophenschulen zugrunde liegen sehen.[30] Entscheidend ist im hiesigen Kontext,

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[28] G.W. Bowersock, 'Philosophy in the Second Sophistic', in G. Clark und T. Rajak (eds.), *Philosophy and Power in the Graeco-Roman World: Essays in Honour of Miriam Griffin* (Oxford 2002), 157–170, hier 160, spricht von "a vast and complex cultural fabric" und einem "commerce in Hellenic traditions", in die Angehörige der Eliten eingebunden waren. Vgl. für einen besonders instruktiven Fall H. von Staden, 'Galen and the "Second Sophistic"', in R. Sorabiji (ed.), *Aristotle and after* (London 1997), 33–54 sowie, mit Gesamtübersicht über das erstaunliche Oeuvre des griechischen Arztes, V. Nutton, s.v. Galenos von Pergamon, *Der Neue Pauly* 4 (1988), 748–756. Siehe auch M.D. Campanile, 'La costruzione del sofista. Note sul *bios* di Polemone di Laodicea', *Studia Hellenistica* 12 (1999), 269–315, hier 288 f. zu Polemon.

[29] Die partielle Vereinnahmung philosophischer Inhalte durch die Rhetorik diagnostiziert Philostrat (vgl. Flintermann 1995, a.a.O. (Anm. 2), 30 f.) im übrigen auch schon für die ‚klassische' Sophistik, die er als Redekunst zu philosophischen Themen – *rhetorikè philosophoúsa* –, nämlich zu solchen ethischer, theologischer und kosmologischer Natur bestimmt (*Vitae Sophistarum* R. 484). Zu den soziologischen Aspekten des angesprochenen zeitgenössischen Konzepts von *pepaideuómenos* siehe Swain 1996, a.a.O. (Anm. 6) 17 ff. und Th. Schmitz, *Bildung und Macht. Zur sozialen und politischen Funktion der zweiten Sophistik in der griechischen Welt der Kaiserzeit* (München 1997), 44 ff. und passim.

[30] A. Brancacci, *Rhetorike philosophousa. Dione Crisostomo nella cultura antica e bizantina*, (Napoli 1985); ders., ‚Seconde sophistique, historiographie et philosophie (Philostrate, Eunape, Synésios)', in B. Cassin (ed.), *Le plaisir de parler. Études de sophistique comparée* (Paris 1986), 87–110.

dass nach Philostrats Kriterium der Öffentlichkeitswirksamkeit eine beachtliche Gruppe von Intellektuellen in die engere Auswahl seiner Biographensammlung geraten musste, die unzweifelhaft als Philosophen anzusprechen waren, wenn sie auch nach Redegewalt und sozialer wie politischer Position und Wirksamkeit zugleich seinem weiter gefassten kulturellen Begriff eines 'Sophisten' zu entsprechen vermochten und ihn als Ehrentitel verdienten.

Bereits im 2. Jahrhundert hatten allerdings im philosophischen Lehrbetrieb Tendenzen eingesetzt bzw. weiter an Boden gewonnen, die langfristig zu einer Marginalisierung der Philosophie, jedenfalls in der Öffentlichkeit, führen mussten. Nicht nur waren drei der traditionellen, in Athen jahrhundertelang mit eigenen Schulgebäuden, Bibliothek und Grundbesitz institutionell verankerten Philosophenschulen zu Beginn der Kaiserzeit dort nicht mehr existent, vielmehr kurzlebige private Schulen an ihre Stelle getreten. Allein der Kepos Epikurs vermochte seinen institutionellen Charakter bis in das 2. nachchristliche Jahrhundert zu behaupten.[31]

Die Rückwendung zu den jeweiligen Stiftern und Klassikern der Schulen, die im 1. Jh. v. Chr. erkennbar wurde (und unmittelbar etwa die Formierung und Kanonisierung des Corpus Aristotelicum zur Folge hatte), setzte sich in der Kaiserzeit fort. Weitere Entwicklungen kamen noch hinzu. Jenseits der gerade in Rom zugleich politisch profilierten oder gesellschaftlich etablierten Kreise und Schulen der Stoa – um die Sextier, Musonius Rufus, Epiktet etc. – hören wir bemerkenswert wenig von philosophischen Anstrengungen und dogmatischen Fortschreibungen im Umfeld dieser Schule.[32] Die Etablierung des Athener Lehrstuhls im Zuge der Einrichtung von Thronoi für alle großen Philosophenschulen in den 160er Jahren bedeutet so eine der letzten uns überhaupt bewahrten Informationen zu dieser Schule.[33]

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[31] J. Ferguson, 'Epicureanism under the Roman Empire', *ANRW* 2.36.4 (Berlin 1990), 2257–2327; M. Erler und R. Bees (eds.), *Epikureismus in der späten Republik und der Kaiserzeit* (Stuttgart 2000). Entscheidendes Zeugnis ist hier ein epigraphisch überlieferter Brief von Kaiserin Plotina; dazu zuletzt R. van Bremen, 'Plotina to all her Friends'. The Letter(s) of the Empress Plotina to the Epicureans of Athens', *Chiron* 35 (2005), 499–532.

[32] J.M. Dillon bemerkt in seinem historischen Überblick über die Philosophie in der hohen Kaiserzeit (in A. Bowman, P. Garnsey and D. Rathbone (eds.), *CAH*² 11: *The High Empire, A.D. 70–192* (Cambridge 2000), 898–921, hier 929), "in general nothing notable was added to Stoic doctrine by school philosophers in our period".

[33] Diogenes Laertius' Interesse an der Geschichte der philosophischen *diadochaí* endet in der augusteischen Epoche; damit teilte er die Haltung der übrigen, heute verlorenen Philosophiegeschichten. Allein für die pyrrhonische Skepsis (der er selbst hinzuzählen

Die ‚Selbstbetrachtungen' Mark Aurels als beeindruckendes Zeugnis stoischen Reflektierens verstellen leicht den Blick auf die Tatsache, dass die Stoa mit dem Philosophenkaiser von der philosophischen Bühne der Kaiserzeit abtritt – relevante Vertreter oder gar Schriften dieser Richtung sind aus dem 3. Jahrhundert nicht mehr überliefert. In der Spätantike verliert sich diese Richtung als eigenständige Schule dann für immer. Gleiches gilt für den Epikureismus. Im 2. Jahrhundert noch durch ein so bedeutendes Dokument wie die monumentale Inschrift des Diogenes von Oinoanda und andere epigraphische sowie literarische Zeugnisse in der Öffentlichkeit präsent bw. dem Historiker faßbar, sind Epikureer nach dem Ende des 2. Jahrhunderts nicht mehr zu erschliessen – eine philosophische Fortentwicklung im Prinzipat allerdings zuvor nicht einmal in Spuren noch zu erkennen.[34]

Deutlicher wird die Problematik der inneren Entwicklung der Philosophenschulen in Hinblick auf ihr öffentliches Profil im Falle des Peripatos. Aristoteliker zählten ungeachtet der unbestrittenen Bedeutung ihres Stifters und seiner Lehre nicht zu den Repräsentanten des Philosophiebetriebes, die in der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung der Kaiserzeit eine prominente Rolle spielten. Gerade einmal eine gute Handvoll begegnen uns in den zahlreichen Texten, die Einblicke in den allgemeinen Kultur- und Bildungsbetrieb der Zeit geben.[35] Zwar vermittelte diese Richtung unberührt von populären Zeitströmungen offenbar eine intensive logische und mathematische Ausbildung, doch kaum ‚konkurrenzfähige' praktisch-philosophische Lehren: Ethische Fragen zählten in dieser Schule nicht zu den bevorzugten Gegenständen.[36]

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ist) hat er die *diadochê* bis in die eigene Zeit fortgeführt; J. Mejer, *Diogenes Laertius and his Hellenistic Background*. (Wiesbaden 1978).

[34] C.J. Castner, *Prosopography of Roman Epicureans from the Second Century B.C. to the Second Century A.D.* (Frankfurt a.M. 1988), XV: "…there is no extant mention of Roman epicureism from the third century A.D." Vgl. auch Dillon 2000, a.a.O. (Anm. 32), 939: "They have left no record of original engagement with any of the main problems of philosophy in this period". Zur Inschrift von Oinoanda siehe hier stellvertretend nur P. Scholz, ‚Ein römischer Epikureer in der Provinz: Der Adressatenkreis der Inschrift des Diogenes von Oinoanda', in K. Piepenbrink (ed.), *Philosophie und Lebenswelt in der Antike* (Darmstadt 2003), 208–228. Beachte auch D. Clay, 'A Lost Epicurean Community', *Greek, Roman & Byzantine Studies* 30 (1989), 313–335.

[35] Ein Abriß der prinzipatszeitlichen Überlieferung zu Philosophen und philosophischer Tätigkeit bei Hahn 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 18–32.

[36] R.W. Sharples, 'Alexander of Aphrodisias and the End of Aristotelian Philosophy', in T. Kobusch und M. Erler (eds.), *Metaphysik und Religion. Zur Signatur des spätantiken Denkens* (München 2002), 1–22. Vgl. H.B. Gottschalk, 'Aristotelian Philosophy in the Roman World from the Time of Cicero to the End of the Second Century A.D.', *ANRW* 2.36.2 (Berlin 1987), 1079–1174.

Einen aufschlussreichen Eindruck von der Eigenart des philosophischen Unterrichts gerade in dieser Schule vermittelt Alexander von Aphrodisias, der zweifellos bedeutendste Peripatetiker der Kaiserzeit. Er stellt gegen 200 n.Chr. klar, dass nicht länger die Diskussion von Thesen, die den klassischen philosophischen Unterricht in Rede und Gegenrede bestimmt hatte, um so die Fähigkeit zur Argumentation auf der Basis allgemeingültiger Prämissen einzuüben, als Lehrmethode praktiziert werde, sondern vielmehr die fortlaufende Kommentierung von Schriften des Schulgründers.[37] Die zahlreichen aus der Feder Alexanders stammenden Kommentare zu aristotelischen Schriften lassen ahnen, wie anspruchs- und entsagungsvoll diese Unterrichtsform, nämlich die abschnittsweise Lektüre und eingehende Kommentierung eines einem speziellen Problem gewidmeten Traktats für die Schüler sein konnte und welch elitäres Selbstverständnis zwangsläufig hier gepflegt wurde. Als konstitutives Element einer allgemeinen höheren Bildung, welche den politischen Eliten der Zeit auch im öffentlichen Leben verwendbare Inhalte oder Fertigkeiten an die Hand gegeben hätte, taugte diese Art Hochschulbetrieb kaum.

Offensichtlich ist: Diese Unterrichtsform hat nichts gemein mit den offenen Gesprächskreisen eines Epiktet oder Musonius Rufus, die die Erörterung ethischer Probleme und aktueller Fragen zum Gegenstand hatten, zugleich Außenstehenden offenstanden und vielfältige soziale Begegnungen erlaubten und deshalb in ihrem Charakter an philosophische Salons der Neuzeit erinnern. Die Sterilität des Unterrichtsbetriebs in *allen* großen Philosophenschulen empfand so auch der junge ägyptische Provinziale Plotin als das eigentliche – und deprimierende – Merkmal des intellektuellen Lebens in Alexandria, als er im Jahr 232 hier zum Studium eintraf.[38]

Die angeführten Entwicklungen und Beobachtungen verweisen in der Summe auf einen Niedergang der Philosophie, der bereits deutlich vor dem Beginn des 3. Jahrhunderts eingesetzt zu haben scheint. Die Stiftung der Athener Lehrstühle im Jahr 176 n.Chr. durch Mark Aurel verschleiert diesen Umstand allerdings wohl; in jedem Falle muß der

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[37] Alexander Aphrodisiensis, *In Aristotelis Topicorum libros octo commentaria* 27, 13. Hierzu I. Hadot, ‚Der philosophische Unterrichtsbetrieb in der römischen Kaiserzeit', *Rheinisches Museum* 146 (2003), 49–72, hier 62 ff.

[38] Porphyrios, *Vita Plotini* 3 [= 13 Harder, siehe Harder 1958, a.a.O. (Anm. 7)].

skizzierte Trend unter den Severern deutlich erkennbar gewesen sein.[39] Abgesehen von der platonischen Schule, die in der hohen Kaiserzeit nicht nur bedeutende Platoniker, sondern auch – mit dem Mittelplatonismus – beachtliche Fortschritte in der doktrinären Entwicklung hervorbrachte,[40] weiterhin abgesehen von den bedeutenden Aristoteles-Kommentaren eines Alexander von Aphrodisias, bot der etablierte philosophische Schulbetrieb, insbesondere der des Kepos und der Stoa, keine lebendige oder innovative Auseinandersetzung mit dem Gedankengut der Stifter mehr. Dieser unzweideutige Niedergang ist damit aber nicht länger auf die sich seit den Severern zuspitzende politische, militärische und wirtschaftliche Krisensituation des Imperiums zurückzuführen,[41] sondern in der Tat entscheidend mit immanenten Entwicklungen in den kaiserzeitlichen Philosophenschulen zu erklären.

Jene aufziehende ‚Krise des 3. Jahrhunderts', deren erste nachhaltige Wirkungen bereits im Gefolge der verlustreichen Donaukriege Mark Aurels in den 160er Jahren sichtbar wurden, vermag auch sonst nicht das Ende einer kulturellen Blüte des 1. und 2. Jahrhunderts zu erklären. Denn diese Blüte fand, was zu wenig beachtet wird, nicht synchron in allen Bereichen des intellektuellen Lebens statt. Deutlich später als die Philosophie erreichte nämlich die römische Rechtswissenschaft ihren Höhepunkt: "In the century after c. 130, and more specifically under the Severans, legal science reached ist apogee".[42] Die drei großen severischen Juristen Papinian (*floruit* ca. 190–212), Ulpian (ca. 200–228) und Paulus (ca. 210–235), alle in einflußreichen Positionen am Kaiserhof tätig, schufen weite Teile der klassischen Rechtsliteratur, die dann im sogen. Zitiergesetz von 426 n. Chr. (*Codex Theodosianus*

[39] Siehe nur die entsprechende detaillierte Diskussion dieser Generation (über die Schulgrenzen hinweg) durch Porphyrios, *Vita Plotini* 20.17–81 [=106 ff. Harder, siehe Harder 1958, a.a.O. (Anm. 7)]. A.K. Bowman, P. Garnsey and Av. Cameron (eds.), *CAH*² 12, *The Crisis of Empire, A.D. 193–337*, enthält bezeichnenderweise keinerlei Einträge über Aristoteliker, Stoiker und Epikureer mehr.

[40] Für den Versuch einer (mittel-)platonischen Prosopographie von Plutarch bis zu Plotin und eine tabellarische Zusammenstellung samt Diskussion siehe Dörries und Baltes a.a.O. (Anm. 8), 144–161. Dörries und Baltes, a.a.O. (Anm. 8), 149 bezeichnen die zweite Hälfte des 1. Jh. und das 2. Jh. n.Chr. als eine Blütezeit des Platonismus.

[41] Diese Auffassung hatte ich noch in meiner Monographie von 1989, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 31 vertreten. Ähnlich bereits Walden 1912, a.a.O. (Anm. 22), 97–106.

[42] D. Ibbetson, 'High Classical Law', in Bowman, Garnsey and Rathbone (eds.) 2000, a.a.O. (Anm. 32), 186; vgl. D. Liebs, ‚Jurisprudenz', in K. Sallmann (ed.), *Handbuch der Lateinischen Literatur der Antike IV* (München 1997), 83, 139 u.ö.

1.4.3) als allein verbindlicher Referenzrahmen für Rechtsstreitigkeiten bestimmt wurde.[43]

Das Selbstbewußtsein dieser Disziplin und ihrer Vertreter spiegelt die Feststellung Ulpians, daß es sich bei der Jurisprudenz um eine echte *ars* handele, nämlich die *ars boni et aequi*. Derselbe Jurist scheint das Recht sogar als die wahre Form der Philosophie betrachtet zu haben: *veram (nisi fallor) philosophiam*.[44] Ungeachtet dieser markanten Bezugnahme auf die Leitwissenschaft Philosophie haben sich die großen Juristen allerdings nicht von der Weisheitslehre ernsthaft beeinflussen lassen: Abstrakte Diskussionen, etwa zum Begriff *iustitia,* fehlen ganz, die entsprechende Definition Ulpians – *constans et perpetua voluntas ius suum cuique tribuere* – bedarf kaum philosophischer Reflexion, bedeutet vielmehr kaum mehr als eine rhetorisch großtrabende populäre Platitüde.[45]

Die in unseren Quellen so markant hervortretende oben diagnostizierte Blüte der Philosophie in der hohen Kaiserzeit ist somit weitgehend als eine Scheinblüte zu bestimmen. Die Disziplin und ihre professionellen Vertreter profitierten primär vom allgemeinen Aufschwung des Bildungsbetriebes der Zeit, hier insbesondere der Rhetorisierung des öffentlichen Lebens und der Kultur. Der unerschöpfliche Schatz an ethischen Positionen und Argumenten, an intellektuellen Gegenständen und Material für rhetorische Übungen und Schaureden, ließ der Philosophie – die den Anspruch übergreifenden Wissens verkörperte – eine zentrale Rolle im Bildungs- und Kulturbetrieb zuwachsen.

Die exzessive Popularisierung ihrer Inhalte, die einseitige Ethisierung ihrer öffentlichen Selbstdarstellung unter dem Primat der *ars vitae*, weiterhin der Verzicht auf innovative wissenschaftliche Forschung und die Vernachlässigung genuin philosophischer Fragestellungen untergruben auf Dauer aber den universalen Wissens- und Geltungsanspruch der Philosophie. Und auch der herkömmliche philosophische Schulbetrieb degenerierte leicht zu einer reinen Institution der Erziehung und praxisorientierten Ausbildung von Angehörigen der Oberschichten.

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[43] Siehe zu ihnen – wie auch zu ihrem wichtigen Vorgänger Gaius (2. Jh. n.Chr.) und zu dem allenfalls wenig späteren Herennius Modestinus (*floruit* ca. 224–240), die gleichfalls dem Kreis der fünf ‚Zitierjuristen' zugehörten – neben der zuvor genannten Literatur auch W. Kunkel, *Herkunft und soziale Stellung der römischen Juristen* (Graz 1967²), 186 ff., 224 f., 244 ff., 259 ff.

[44] *Digesta* 1.1.1.2. Siehe Ibbetson 2000, a.a.O. (Anm. 42), 192.

[45] *Digesta* 1.1.10 *praefatio*; 1.1.10.1. Ulpian läßt sich immerhin möglicherweise neuplatonischen Kreisen zurechnen. T. Honoré, *Ulpian* (Oxford 2002²), 82. Die hier gebotene Charakterisierung bei Ibbetson 2000, a.a.O. (Anm. 42), 191.

Die Rhetorik wiederum ging gestärkt aus der intensiven Begegnung und gegenseitigen Durchdringung mit der Philosophie in der hohen Kaiserzeit hervor. Ja, sie emanzipierte sich von der Universaldisziplin, nachdem sie sich der ethischen, politischen und allgemein philosophischen Inhalte der Philosophie weitgehend bemächtigt hatte. Anders als die Philosophie, die nur in der neuplatonischen Bewegung im 3. Jahrhundert noch eine lebendige und originäre Fortsetzung erlebte, entfaltete die Rhetorik über die Blüte des 2. Jahrhunderts hinaus auch in der Krise des 3. Jahrhunderts bemerkenswerte kreative Kräfte und sollte so, zusammen mit der Rechtswissenschaft, in der Spätantike der Philosophie im öffentlichen Leben endgültig den Primat erfolgreich streitig machen. Die jüngste Studie zur Geschichte der Rhetorik in der Kaiserzeit verdeutlicht die enormen Fortschritte, die gerade die rhetorische Theorie im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert nahm, und gelangt zum Schluß, daß das 3. Jahrhundert als eine unerhört kreative Periode betrachtet werden muß, das überhaupt erst die Grundlagen für die anhaltende öffentliche Bedeutung der Disziplin im öffentlichen Leben bis in das 6. Jahrhundert hinein legte.[46]

Erst jetzt haben wir umrisshaft die Situation der Philosophie erfasst, welche ihre weitere Entwicklung im 3. Jahrhundert bestimmen sollte: weg von der Rhetorik und einem alles dominierenden Selbstverständnis von *ars vitae* in ethischer Perspektive – und hin zu einer *vita contemplativa* in der Zurückgezogenheit. Denn auch vor dem Hintergrund des machtvollen Aufkommens alternativer spiritueller Lebensentwürfe in der Öffentlichkeit hatte der philosophische Lehrbetrieb des 2. Jahrhunderts kaum mehr eine Lebensgrundlage. Der generelle Rückgang der blühenden Vielfalt des kulturellen Lebens der hohen Prinzipatszeit, erst recht aber die wirtschaftlichen und militärischen Krisenerscheinungen taten das Ihrige. Und schließlich ließ auch die zunehmende Verdrängung der bildungsfreundlichen traditionellen Eliten aus politischen und militärischen Führungspositionen die selbstverständliche Beschäftigung mit Philosophie als Vorbereitung auf eine öffentliche Karriere obsolet werden.

Als Plotin Kaiser Gallienus, seinen Freund und Protektor, um das Jahr 266 um die Freigabe aus seiner stadtrömischen Praxis ersuchte

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[46] M. Heath, *Menander. A Rhetor in Context* (Oxford 2004), hier besonders Kapitel 3, 'The Third Century: Fruition', 52–89. Vgl. ders., 'Rhetoric in Mid-Antiquity', in T.P. Wiseman (ed.), *Classics in Progress. Essays on Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford 2002), 419–439.

und den Rückzug nach Süditalien mitsamt seiner treuesten Schüler vorbereitete, wurde der Bruch des führenden Philosophen der Epoche mit dem kulturellen und gesellschaftlichen Leben der hohen Kaiserzeit offensichtlich. Von einem der hochgestellten Schüler Plotins berichtet sein Biograph Porphyrios – regelrecht programmatisch –, er habe just in dieser Situation, nur wenige Stunden, bevor er die stadtrömische Prätur antreten sollte, den Verzicht auf dieses Amt erklärt und jeder weiteren öffentlichen Karriere abgeschworen: und dies nur, um dem Philosophen nach Kampanien folgen zu können. Denn dort sollte, in einer noch zu gründenden neuen Stadt mit dem Namen Platonopolis, eine exklusive philosophische Gemeinschaft entstehen, welcher der römische Senator an der Seite seines Lehrmeisters sein weiteres Leben widmen wollte.[47]

Der Rückzug des Philosophen und der Philosophie aus der Gesellschaft nimmt so mit dem Beginn des Neuplatonismus, der letzten bedeutenden philosophischen Schule der Antike, seinen Anfang.[48] Philostrat und Plotin, jene so unterschiedlichen griechischen Intellektuellen, die es beide früh in ihrer eigenen beruflichen Karriere – als Sophist bzw. Philosoph – nach Rom, in das kulturelle und politische Zentrum der Welt ihrer Zeit, des 3. Jahrhunderts, gezogen hatte, markieren mithin auf je verschiedene Weise einen Wendepunkt der Philosophie und Kulturgeschichte.

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[47] Porphyrios, *Vita Plotini* 7 (= 39–41 Harder), über Rogatianus. Weitere Senatoren werden *ibid.* als Anhänger namentlich angeführt.

[48] Zu diesem Rückzug der Neuplatoniker aus der Gesellschaft und ihrer (späteren) ‚Verwandlung' zu heidnischen heiligen Männern siehe die klassischen Studien von G. Fowden, 'The Platonist Philosopher and his Circle in Late Antiquity', *Philosophia* 7 (1977), 359–383; ders., 'The Pagan Holy Man in Late Antique Society', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 102 (1982), 33–59. Zum Problem der Ausbildung einer neuplatonischen politischen Philosophie siehe D.J. O'Meara, *Platonopolis. Platonic Political Philosophy in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge 2003).

ZU EINIGEN STRUKTURVERÄNDERUNGEN DER LITERATURREZEPTION IM ZEITALTER DER KRISE DES IMPERIUM ROMANUM (3.–6. JAHRHUNDERT) UND DEREN URSACHEN

Armin Eich

Gegenstand der Untersuchung

In der antiken Literatur sind frühzeitig Formen entstanden, die für Jahrhunderte stilbildend wurden und in einem viel späteren, ‚bürgerlichen' Zeitalter als mediale Grundlage dienen sollten, um ein sozialpsychologisches Gebilde zu konstruieren, das als ‚bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit' zu einem kritischen Resonanzkörper der Anciens Régimes Europas wurde.[1] Bei diesen Literaturformen handelt es sich beispielsweise um veröffentlichte Texte von Redemanuskripten, Satiren, zeitgeschichtliche Darstellungen, Gedichte politischen Inhalts und manches andere mehr. Aufgrund der Ähnlichkeit der äußeren Formen sind Historiker häufig davon ausgegangen, daß ohne weitere Beweisführung die Existenz eines der neuzeitlichen ‚bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit' analogen sozialen Gebildes als Kommunikationspartners der antiken Schriftsteller angenommen werden könne, eben eines ‚kritischen', politikorientierten Lesepublikums. In einer älteren Untersuchung, auf die ich mich hier beziehe (Anm. 1), habe ich versucht zu zeigen, daß eine solche Annahme verfehlt ist. Die antiken Autoren verwendeten zwar ähnliche literarische Formen wie ihre ‚bürgerlichen' Nachfahren, sie rechneten aber mit speziellen Rezeptionsstilen, die von den neuzeitlichen fundamental verschieden waren. Um nicht früher Gesagtes ausführlich zu wiederholen, seien an dieser Stelle nur einige Hauptmomente, vor allem negativer Natur, noch einmal hervorgehoben. So galt etwa in den antiken Gesellschaften – vor der Spätantike – eine Art Tabu, in literarischen oder semiliterarischen Texten formulierte Ideen, Auffassungen oder Argumente in einem ernsthaften Sinn auf die politische Sphäre zu beziehen. Während im Zeitalter der Aufklärung selbstverständlich der Materialismus

[1] Vgl. A. Eich, *Politische Literatur in der römischen Gesellschaft* (Köln 2000), 93 ff.

eines Helvétius, der Antiklerikalismus eines Voltaire, die ökonomischen Vorstellungen der Physiokraten oder der Konservativismus Edmund Burkes, um nur einige illustrative Beispiele zu nennen, im Vollsinne öffentliche, d. h. auch, politische Bedeutung hatten (weswegen Regierungen auch versuchten, die einen Meinungen durch Zensur zum Verschwinden zu bringen und andere durch ‚Propagierung' zu fördern), blieben in der Antike literarische Debatten über politische Gegenstände, sofern sie überhaupt stattfanden, auf eine rein literarische Dimension beschränkt.[2] Es war daher nicht üblich, die eigene politische Identität öffentlich durch das Bekenntnis zu einer aus Büchern bezogenen Lehre festzulegen (wie es etwa Robespierre tat, wenn er sich auf Rousseau bezog). Häufig genug wäre es gar nicht kommunizierbar gewesen. Ein Ciceronianus, wie Plinius, war kein politischer Anhänger der Ideen Ciceros – es wäre kaum möglich, auch nur zu benennen, welches diese Ideen gewesen sein sollten –, sondern ein Ämulator des ciceronischen Stils. Dementsprechend war fast alle antike Rezeption Rezeption von Stilvorbildern.[3]

In den literarischen Texten als solchen fand, soweit Gegenstände von authentischem politischen Interesse betroffen waren, so gut wie keine differenzierte oder auch nur polemische Auseinandersetzung mit ‚Meinungen' anderer Autoren statt. Eine konkrete, mit Texten weltanschaulicher Gegner arbeitende Polemik, die *zugleich* öffentlich-politische Relevanz beanspruchte, gab es nicht. Dementsprechend fehlten auch institutionalisierte Kommunikationsformen, innerhalb derer eine ernsthafte Konfrontation von politisch-sozialer Realität und literarischer Kontestation vermittelt worden wäre. Sicherlich konnte bei einer Vorlesungsveranstaltung, einer Abendgesellschaft oder dergleichen über ein literarisches Thema gesprochen werden (über Probleme wie etwa *quod Achilli nomen inter virgines fuisset, quid Sirenes cantare sint solitae*),[4] doch ein Versuch, beispielsweise über die Todesstrafe oder die Sklaverei im Vollsinne ernsthaft zu debattieren, wäre schlicht lächerlich gewesen. Die

[2] Vgl. für eine ausführliche Dokumentation Eich 2000, a.a.O. (Anm. 1), passim.

[3] Die wissenschaftliche Literatur, in der die literarische Öffentlichkeit der Moderne beschrieben worden ist, ist nicht von der Interpretation der Medien als solchen ausgegangen (wie etwa Rousseaus *Contrat social* oder Thomas Paines *Rights of Man*), sondern von Quellen, die die Rezeption und Wirkung solcher Texte verzeichnet haben. Ein analoges Vorgehen bei klassischen („vor-spätantiken") Texten zeigt, daß diese unter ästhetischen, pädagogischen und einigen anderen, aber jedenfalls nicht politisch-publizistischen Gesichtspunkten gelesen wurden. Vgl. Eich 2000, a.a.O. (Anm. 1), 128 ff.

[4] Sueton, *Tiberius* 70.3.

gesellschaftlichen Ordnungen lagen fest, es bestand lange Jahrhunderte Konsens, daß sie nur durch Gewalt, aber nicht durch Worte geändert werden konnten.

In den folgenden Bemerkungen soll gezeigt werden, daß diese Jahrhunderte alte Kommunikationskonstellation sich in der Spätantike partiell (d. h. bei gleichzeitiger Bewahrung intakter Momente klassischer Textauffassungen in vielen Bereichen) veränderte. Zunächst wird die Eigenart dieser Veränderungen interessieren, in dem folgenden Abschnitt wird postuliert, daß diese Veränderungen einer bestimmten Tendenz folgten, die, in allerdings sehr bescheidenem Ausmaß, Entwicklungen antizipierte, die später, seit dem 17. Jahrhundert, für das Phänomen der ‚bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit' charakteristisch wurden. Schließlich soll das Ursachengefüge skizziert werden, das zu dieser antizipativen Entwicklung beigetragen hat.

Dieses Ursachengefüge schreibt sich in eine Entwicklung ein, die häufig als ‚Krise' des Imperium Romanum bezeichnet wird. Sicherlich ist der Begriff der ‚Krise' hier nicht im strengen Sinn als Moment der Zuspitzung antagonistischer Entwicklungen zu verstehen. In diesem Sinn trat etwa das französische Ancien Régime in eine Krise ein, als Ludwig XVI. 1788 die Generalstände einberief. Einen solchen Moment der Entscheidung hat das Imperium Romanum nicht erlebt. Doch zeigte sich im Laufe seiner Geschichte, verstärkt seit dem dritten Jahrhundert n. Chr., daß die spezifische fiskalische, militärische und politische Kräfteanordnung des Imperium unter dem äußeren Druck zunehmend schlechter funktionierte und sich ihr Daseinszweck darauf reduzierte, sich ihrer Zerstörung entgegenzustemmen. Daß die Agonie sich über Jahrhunderte hinzog, war durch die gewaltigen Ressourcen bedingt, die das Imperium seiner Auflösung (im Westen) bzw. Kontraktion und Umgestaltung (im Osten) entgegensetzen konnte. Diese Phase eines ‚krisenhaften Prozesses', der ungefähr vom dritten bis zum sechsten Jahrhundert andauerte, kann verkürzt als ‚Krise des Imperium' bezeichnet werden.

Aufgrund der Knappheit des zur Verfügung stehenden Raumes kann im folgenden nur das Wichtigste hervorgehoben werden; die Belege müssen auf illustrative Beispiele beschränkt werden.

Die Etablierung eines neuen Texttyps in der Spätantike: argumentierende Texte, die sich auf die öffentlich-politische Sphäre bezogen

Wie bereits betont, blieben traditionelle oder ‚klassische' Typen der Literaturrezeption in der Spätantike in vielen Bereichen fast unverändert bestehen. Dies gilt speziell für die Literaturgattungen, die formal an die traditionellen Gattungen der Poesie (Claudian oder Nonnos), die panegyrische Rhetorik (die *Panegyrici latini*) oder die klassische Historiographie (Ammian oder Zosimos) anknüpften. Für die Texte dieser und vergleichbarer Autoren gilt das gleiche wie das, was sich für die ‚politische Literatur' der späten Republik und frühen Kaiserzeit zeigen läßt. Ihr argumentativer (nicht künstlerischer) Gehalt ist, wenn überhaupt vorhanden, äußerst konventionell und genuskonform; eine öffentliche, unter Nennung von Beweisgründen ausgetragene Auseinandersetzung mit diesen Texten fand nicht statt; eine eventuelle öffentliche Resonanz, die der Inhalt dieser Bücher verursacht hätte, ist nicht zu registrieren. Diese klassizistische Literatur der Spätantike lebte wie ihre klassischen Vorbilder in einer gesonderten Sphäre für sich. Dies galt jedoch nicht mehr für alle Textgattungen. Vermehrt seit dem dritten Jahrhundert läßt sich registrieren, daß der im engeren Sinne öffentliche Raum sich für komplexere publizierte Texte öffnete und textbezogenes, komplexes Argumentieren dort auftrat, wo zuvor nahezu ausschließlich Bonmots, elegante Formulierungskunst, Weltläufigkeit dokumentierende Zitate oder – im Falle staatlicher Verlautbarungen – harsche Anordnungen dominiert hatten. Diesen Erscheinungen möchte ich mich jetzt zuwenden. Die Zwischenüberschriften dienen nur der groben Orientierung; die Phänomene sind so ineinander verschränkt, daß sie sich nicht glatt auseinanderdividieren lassen.

Kaiserliche Verlautbarungen

Augenfällig ist diese Entwicklung zunächst bei offiziellen Verlautbarungen der kaiserlichen Zentrale. Die – häufig in großen Verbreitungsräumen, zuweilen reichsweit – publizierten Texte haben ihre gattungsgeschichtlichen Vorläufer in den Edikten und anderen Verlautbarungsformen der römisch-republikanischen Organe und den von Augustus geprägten kaiserlichen Publikationsmitteln (Edikten, Reskripten, Episteln und anderen). Der Mitteilungsstil dieser Texte war ‚knapp-anordnend', inhaltlich waren sie meist auf das Nötigste beschränkt, ihr Gegenstand war in

der Regel ein individueller Sachverhalt von lokaler Bedeutung.[5] Seit dem dritten Jahrhundert wuchs der Umfang dieser Verlautbarungen, ihre Gegenstände waren nun solche allgemeinen Interesses und vor allem, ihr Duktus wurde zunehmend argumentativ, mitunter regelrecht apologetisch. Ein typischer Vertreter ist das Proömium zu dem berühmten tetrarchischen *edictum de pretiis,* in dem die Herrscher ausdrücklich hervorhoben, daß ihr Vorgehen einer „besonderen argumentativen Rechtfertigung" (vgl. Zeile 28, *speciali argumento*) bedürfe und sie sich in einer „Erklärungspflicht" (Zeile 27, *explicare debemus*) sähen. Niemals hätten ein Augustus oder ein Trajan eine solche Ausdrucksweise verwendet. Die frühen Kaiser formulierten keine umständlichen Argumente, jedenfalls nicht in allgemein zugänglichen Texten, sondern teilten in knappen, harten Worten ihren Willen mit. Das genügte.

Mit dem Vorrücken der Zeit wurden die Verlautbarungen immer ausführlicher und deckten immer mehr Gebiete ab.[6] In diesem Rahmen muß der allgemeine Hinweis auf die Novellensammlungen vor allem des fünften und sechsten Jahrhunderts genügen, die zahlreiche (im Gegensatz zu den *Codices* unverstümmelte) Texte überliefern. Manche Verlautbarungen erreichten geradezu den Umfang von Büchern (vgl. beispielsweise Anmerkung 22).

Die spätantike Zentrale empfand sich im Gegensatz zu ihren Vorläufern als Hüterin und Vermittlerin einer alle Untertanen betreffenden Wahrheit. Sie suchte nach neuartigen Wegen der Vermittlung, die mitunter wie Vorstufen moderner ‚Propaganda' oder ‚Zensur' anmuten. Genannt seien etwa die diffamatorischen Pilatusakten, die Maximinus Daia offenbar zur Pflichtlektüre in den Schulen seines Reichsteiles machte,[7] oder die Zensurbefehle gegen die Schriften des Presbyters Arius, mit denen Konstantin dessen Lehre unterdrücken wollte.[8] Solche Erscheinungen haben praktisch keine Vorbilder in der römischen Geschichte. Frühere Anordnungen von Bücherverbrennungen waren als Strafen gegen Personen (für Beleidigungsdelikte) gedacht, nicht als Repressionsmaßnahmen gegen Doktrinen. Die betroffenen Personen wie

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[5] Zu den Quellen vgl. A. Eich und P. Eich, ‚Thesen zur Genese des Verlautbarungsstils der spätantiken kaiserlichen Zentrale', *Tyche* 19 (2004), 75–104.

[6] Vgl. A. Eich und P. Eich 2004, a.a.O. (Anm. 5), 81 ff. mit zahlreichen Beispielen; D. Karamboula, ‚Soma Basileias. Zur Staatsidee im spätantiken Byzanz', *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 46 (1996), 1–24.

[7] Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 9.7.1.

[8] Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica* 1.21.4.

etwa Cassius Severus,[9] Cremutius Cordus[10] oder Antistius Sosianus[11] vertraten keine Doktrinen, sie hatten lediglich Wendungen benutzt, die gerichtlich als Belege für eine abschätzige Haltung gegenüber bestimmten Personen, meist des Kaiserhauses, gewertet wurden. Um den Zweck als Beweismittel zu erfüllen, war es im übrigen unerheblich, ob die betreffenden Texte publik waren oder, wie in der Antike nicht selten, nur im privaten Kontext rezitiert worden waren (die verurteilten Gedichte von Gaius Cominius [Tacitus, *Annales* 4.31.1] und Sosianus waren beispielsweise nur im privaten Umkreis bekannt).

Resonanz auf Verlautbarungen

Die spätantiken Kaiser erläuterten ihre Auffassungen offenkundig nicht deswegen, weil sie mit ihren Untertanen in Debatten über ihre Entscheidungen eintreten wollten, sondern weil sie die Überzeugungskraft ihrer Argumente für unerschütterlich hielten. Doch wer Argumente formuliert, eröffnet die Möglichkeit einer speziellen Form des – zivilen – Dissenses, nämlich des Gegenargumentes. Mit größeren Überlieferungslücken ist wohl zu rechnen, denn die entsprechenden semiliterarischen Texte hatten schließlich nur ein ephemeres Interesse. Doch rechnet man dies ein, ist die Überlieferungslage markant genug. Es kann hier nur auf einige illustrative Beispiele hingewiesen werden. Genannt sei zunächst das gesamte Corpus der donatistischen Literatur, deren Autoren sich hartnäckig staatlichen Belehrungen argumentativ widersetzten (siehe auch unten). Bezeichnenderweise stellte Gregor von Nazianz das Rhetorenedikt des Apostaten an den Beginn seiner Abrechnung mit dem verstorbenen Kaiser Julian.[12] Die berühmte Dritte Relation des Symmachus ist zum größten Teil eine drängend argumentierende Auseinandersetzung mit der Anordnung Valentinians II., den Vestalinnen (und anderen Priesterkollegien) bestimmte Immunitäten zu nehmen.[13] Die (auch schriftlich begründete) Verurteilung Priscillians

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[9] Tacitus, *Annales* 1.72.3; vgl. (auch zum folgenden) A. Eich 2000, a.a.O. (Anm. 1), 300 ff.

[10] Tacitus, *Annales* 4.34 f.; Sueton, *Tiberius* 61; Cassius Dio 57.24.

[11] Tacitus, *Annales* 14.48.

[12] Gregor von Nazianz, *Oratio* 4.4.

[13] Symmachus, *Relatio* 3.11 ff. Vgl. R. Klein, *Der Streit um den Victoriaaltar* (Darmstadt 1972), 78 ff. Die Polemik um den Victoriaaltar war unter anderem ein Streit um das gratianische Remotionsedikt von 382.

und seiner Schule durch Magnus Maximus (wohl 386 n. Chr.) gab Anlaß zu einer umfangreichen literarischen Polemik.[14] Anstoß für eine vielfältige, äußerst positive literarische Reaktion bot die Publikation des Ediktes, in dem Anastasios den Verzicht auf die Erhebung des *chrysargyron* verkündete (498 n. Chr.).[15] Der wohl am besten dokumentierte Fall ist die Auseinandersetzung um die sogenannten ‚Drei Kapitel', die zwar in die Mitte des sechsten Jahrhunderts gehört und damit außerhalb des für diesen Band gezogenen chronologischen Rahmens angesiedelt ist, aber dennoch, weil sie einiges Typische sehr gut illustriert und weil in diesem Streit mehrere Entwicklungen kulminieren, hier nicht übergangen werden soll. Justinian hatte 543 (oder 544) in einem Edikt über einige Schriften dreier kirchlicher Autoren (Theodoros von Mopsuestia, Theodoretos von Kyrrhos und Ibas von Edessa) das Anathema ausgesprochen. In der folgenden Zeit wurde es üblich, einfach von den drei ‚Abschnitten' (*capita*) dieses Ediktes zu sprechen, wenn man die drei Autoren und ihre verurteilten Werke meinte. Zahlreiche Angehörige des Klerus, vor allem im Westen, akzeptierten diese Verurteilung nicht. Zu ihrem wichtigsten Sprachrohr wurde – abgesehen von dem zeitweise gegen das Edikt auftretenden Papst Vigilius – der Bischof Facundus von Hermiane (im Süden der byzacenischen Provinz). In seiner wohl 550 erschienenen zwölfbändigen Schrift verteidigte er die Orthodoxie der verurteilten Autoren ausführlich unter Aufbietung zahlreicher Textpassagen und Interpretationen.[16] Darüber hinaus existierte eine umfangreiche polemische Pamphletliteratur. Facundus selbst hatte bereits 547 während seines Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel innerhalb von sieben Tagen eine erste (nicht erhaltene) Apologie der inkriminierten Autoren publiziert, die er für die ausführliche Streitschrift exzerpierte. Später ließ er eine Polemik unter dem Titel *Contra Mocianum* folgen.[17] Unter anderem auf Facundus stützte Pelagius seine Intervention in die Polemik: *In defensione*

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[14] Vgl. H. Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila* (Oxford 1976), 138 ff.

[15] Vgl. die umfangreiche Stellensammlung bei R. Delmaire, ‚Remarques sur le chrysargyre et sa périodicité', *Revue Numismatique* 27 (1985), 120–129, 121 Anm. 3. Doch auch dieses gefeierte Edikt löste noch einen erbitterten Papierkrieg aus, nämlich um die Frage, ob Konstantin I., dem manche nichts Schlechtes nachsagen wollten, tatsächlich als Urheber dieser Steuer bezeichnet werden dürfte; vgl. Euagrios Scholastikos, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39 ff.

[16] Vgl. jetzt die vierbändige kommentierte Ausgabe von A. Fraïsse-Bétoulières, *Facundus d'Hermiane. Défense des Trois Chapitres (À Justinien)* (Paris 2002–2006). Die *Introduction* vol. 1, 9–138 gibt eine materialreiche Einführung in den Drei-Kapitel-Streit, der ich viele Hinweise verdanke.

[17] Fraïsse-Bétoulières 2006, a.a.O. (Anm. 16), vol. 4, 227–272.

Trium Capitulorum.[18] Weitere Reflexe auf die (afrikanische Dimension der) Diskussion bietet der Chronist Victor von Tunnuna, der seinerseits ein Parteigänger (auf der Seite der ‚Drei Kapitel') war.[19] Ein anonymes – früher zu Unrecht Facundus zugeschriebenes – Pamphlet mit dem Titel *Epistula fidei catholicae in defensione Trium Capitulorum*,[20] das möglicherweise im Mailänder Raum entstanden ist, argumentiert grundsätzlicher und gibt sich weit polemischer als das ‚wissenschaftliche' *opus magnum* des Bischofs von Hermiane. Darüber hinaus kursierten auch die offiziellen kirchlichen Stellungnahmen wie das Justinian entgegenkommende *Iudicatum* von Vigilius (548), das die Anhänger der ‚Drei Kapitel' erbitterte und vor allem in Afrika gereizte Gegenreaktionen hervorrief, und das wiederum relativierende *Constitutum* desselben Papstes vom 14. Mai 553, das Justinian in Zorn versetzte.[21] Das bedeutendste Moment des Streits ist jedoch, daß der Herrscher selbst die Polemiken offenkundig verfolgte und mit eigenen Publikationen in den Gang der Diskussion eingriff. Neben anderem ist vor allem der 551 verfaßte Traktat *De recta fide* zu erwähnen,[22] in dem er offenbar unter anderem bestimmte Kritikpunkte des Facundus zu widerlegen suchte. Obwohl der Kaiser das natürlich nicht wünschte, erschien er durch diese Maßnahme als ein in gewisser Weise gleichberechtigter Diskussionspartner unter mehreren und wurde von den übrigen Pamphletisten im wesentlichen auch so behandelt. Beeindruckend geschieht dies in den Auftaktkapiteln von Facundus' *Defensio*, in denen der Autor den Herrscher großzügig für seine früheren, mit dem *Chalcedonense* übereinstimmenden Verlautbarungen lobt, um ihm dann den Widerspruch vor Augen zu führen, der darin liege, die Schriften von Autoren zu verbieten, die das Konzil von Chalkedon als orthodox anerkannt hatte. Da der Kaiser das Konzil akzeptierte, war er nach den Regeln der Syllogistik eines Argumentationsfehlers überführt. Dies sollte nicht der einzige Fehler bleiben, den Facundus seinem Kaiser vorrechnete, verbunden noch dazu mit der Aufforderung, diese Argumente „huldvoll oder wenigstens geduldig aufzunehmen" (*sed*

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[18] R. Devreesse (ed.), Studi e Testi 57 (Città del Vatticano 1932).

[19] R. Collins (ed.), *Corpus Christianorum*, Series Latina 173 A (Turnhout 2001). Vgl. Fraïsse-Bétoulières 2002, a.a.O. (Anm. 16), vol. 1, 12 f.

[20] Fraïsse-Bétoulières 2006, a.a.O. (Anm. 16), vol. 4, 277–319.

[21] Vgl. Fraïsse-Bétoulières 2002, a.a.O. (Anm. 16), vol. 1, 43 ff.

[22] *Patrologia Latina* 69,225–267 und *Patrologia Graeca* 86, 993–1041. Zur Polemik gegen Facundus vgl. Fraïsse-Bétoulières 2002, a.a.O. (Anm. 16), vol. 1, 15. S. auch K.L. Noethlichs, Justinianus (Kaiser), Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum 19 (2001), 668–763, 754.

rogo, clementissime imperator, ut rationes meas vel gratanter vel patienter accipias).[23] Auf dergleichen Zumutungen antwortete der Kaiser mit seiner oben erwähnten Gegenschrift (*De recta fide*). Man muß sich nur einmal vorstellen, die Adressaten eines augusteischen Ediktes hätten diesen Text als interessante Argumentationsgrundlage gewürdigt, die Fehler in einer publizierten Schrift nachgewiesen und das Dossier an den Herrscher mit großem Lob für dessen aufrechte Gesinnung zurückgeschickt, um zu ermessen, was sich in den Jahrhunderten zwischen Augustus und Justinian – im kommunikativen Bereich – geändert hatte.[24]

Textbezogenheit des neuen debattierenden Stils

In dem spätantiken debattierenden Stil der politischen Auseinandersetzung wurden Wahrheitsansprüche in Texten artikuliert, die veröffentlicht wurden und sich den Lesern als urteilender Instanz stellten. Dies läßt sich beispielsweise – bei exzeptionell guter Quellenlage – anhand des sogenannten Donatistenstreites verfolgen. Es muß allerdings, dies sei vorausgeschickt, bei sämtlichen hier vorgebrachten Beispielen beachtet werden, daß sie keinesfalls die Ausschließlichkeit der literarischen Dimension belegen sollen. Dies wäre ein ganz verfehlter Eindruck. Natürlich ging es beim Donatistenstreit, wie bei den anderen hier genannten und vielen anderen vergleichbaren Konflikten, nicht in erster Linie um Literatur. Es geht nur darum zu zeigen, daß die politischen Konflikte der Spätantike häufig eine literarische Komponente hatten, genauer gesagt, daß Gruppierungen oder Instanzen, die für konfligierende Geltungsansprüche eintraten, diese auch in ihren Publikationen argumentativ vertraten. Im Donatistenkonflikt geschah dies über das Medium von Pamphleten oder auch wissenschaftlicher Werke.[25] Wie häufig in den spätantiken Debatten, bot dabei ein punktueller Streit das Ausgangsmotiv, um einen prinzipiellen Konflikt auszutragen. Die ‚Donatisten' sahen mit der Beteiligung eines Traditors an der Weihe

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[23] Facundus, *Defensio* 1.2.1.

[24] Vgl. Facundus, *Defensio* 1.1.1: *Confessionem fidei tui, clementissime imperator, magni concilii Chalcedonensis definitionibus consonantem, et approbavi semper, et adversus multorum contradictionibus semper adserui.*

[25] Grundlegend ist das monumentale Werk von P. Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'à l'invasion arabe*, Bde. 5–7 (Paris 1920 ff.). W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church, A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (Oxford 1971) hat diese reiche Pamphletliteratur in eine narrative Darstellung des Konflikts eingebettet.

Cäcilians von Karthago (312) die apostolische Sukzession gestört und versuchten zunächst primär, die Schuld des angeblichen Traditors – Felix von Apthungi – präzise nachzuweisen, was zur Ausbreitung von kriminalistischen *minutiae* Anlaß gab, die noch 411, in dem karthagischen Religionsgespräch, eine wichtige Rolle spielten. Die Gegenseite ließ sich wohl partiell auf diese kriminalistische Argumentation ein, postulierte aber auch auf der Basis ihrer Sakramentenlehre, die nicht die Sündenlosigkeit des Spenders zur Voraussetzung der Gültigkeit der Spendung machte, ihre grundsätzliche Irrelevanz. Aus dieser Positionierung ergaben sich Weiterungen, die schließlich, wie Augustinus betonte, in der grundsätzlichen Frage mündeten, wie die Kirche als Glaubensgemeinschaft konstituiert sei: *Quaestio certe inter nos versatur ubi sit ecclesia, utrum apud nos an apud illos*.[26] Wenn der Anspruch der Donatisten zurecht erhoben wäre, dann – so empfand es Augustinus – sei die große Masse der Gläubigen aufgrund eines von ihnen nicht zu verantwortenden Sukzessionsfehlers mit Gottes Duldung in die Irre geführt worden, während die wahre Gemeinschaft in einer regionalen Sekte überleben würde. Die konfligierenden Wahrheitsansprüche wurden vor allem literarisch ausgetragen. Diese Orientierung auf geschriebene Texte ging so weit, daß Augustinus die Herausforderungen seines Konkurrenten Petilianus zu einem Streitgespräch konsequent ausschlug,[27] und – mit der unfreiwilligen Ausnahme des karthagischen Religionsgesprächs von 411 – die Auseinandersetzung auf Pamphlete beschränkte. Dies stellte die klassischen kulturellen Gewohnheiten auf den Kopf, die eine politische Auseinandersetzung in lebendiger Wechselrede unter Anwesenden auszutragen forderten und Ausnahmen allenfalls bei unabweisbar notwendiger Abwesenheit eines Partners zuließen.[28]

Mit der Tendenz, Konflikte vermittels des geschriebenen Wortes in der Öffentlichkeit auszutragen, gelangte das Element des zu eristischen oder stützenden Zwecken angeführten Zitats, das in diesen Funktionen in der klassischen Literatur praktisch keine Rolle spielte, zu erheblicher Bedeutung. In der oben (Anm. 16) angegebenen Ausgabe der *Defensio* des Facundus sind Zitate kursiv hervorgehoben. Ein bloßes Durchblättern der Bände zeigt bereits die Wichtigkeit dieser besonders konkreten Form der Bezugnahme auf die Texte, mit denen

[26] Augustinus, *Epistula ad Catholicos* 2.
[27] Vgl. Frend 1971, a.a.O. (Anm. 25), 253.
[28] Vgl. A. Eich 2000, a.a.O. (Anm. 1), 273 ff.

sich der Autor argumentativ auseinandersetzte oder die er als Stütze seiner Auffassung anführte. Für die spätantiken Kirchenhistoriker wie Eusebios, Sokrates und Sozomenos wurde das ausführliche Zitat (auch in Form der engen Paraphrase) eine bevorzugte Form der Darstellung. Sozomenos hat der historiographischen Praxis des Zitierens, das ja deswegen für die Kirchenhistoriker so bedeutsam wurde, weil die Objekte ihrer Darstellung Träger bestimmter komplexer Wahrheitsansprüche waren, ein programmatisches Kapitel gewidmet.[29]

Je ausgeprägter die Neigung wurde, weltanschauliche Gegensätze in der Öffentlichkeit auszutragen, desto wichtiger wurde auch der korrekte Umgang mit den Texten der Gegner. Petilianus etwa warf Augustinus explizit vor, ihn in zentraler Hinsicht absichtlich falsch zu zitieren.[30] Sozomenos hebt in dem angesprochenen programmatischen Kapitel das Problem ‚angepaßter' und variierender Texte besonders hervor, das es schwierig mache, Vertreter von Glaubensrichtungen auf bestimmte Meinungen präzise festzulegen.[31] Rufinus von Aquileia verpflichtete in der *praefatio* seiner Origines-Bearbeitung alle potentiellen Kopisten seines Werkes feierlich, von jeder Textmanipulation abzusehen.[32] Kaum ein anderes Moment macht die Bedeutung von Texten als Trägern – öffentlich kontestierbarer – Wahrheiten so deutlich wie diese Angst, von Gegnern falsch zitiert zu werden.

Soziale Konstruktionen von Debatten

Über die Entstehung seines ersten apologetischen Pamphlets zu den Drei Kapiteln berichtet Facundus, Vigilius habe in Konstantinopel 547 (oder 548) die zu einer Aussprache eingeladenen Kleriker aufgefordert, *ut scripto quisque responderet quid ei de his capitulis videretur*.[33] Aus dem Diskussionsprozeß wurden die schriftlichen Stellungnahmen entwickelt. Das Heraustragen von Diskussionsgegenständen aus lokalen Zirkeln in eine öffentliche Debatte ist ein zentrales Moment der Idealtypik neuzeitlicher literarischer Öffentlichkeit.[34] Der ‚Debattierclub' war in

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[29] Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica* 1.14 ff.

[30] Vgl. Augustinus, *Contra litteras Petiliani* 3.23 ff.; P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris 1950), 241.

[31] Sozomenos, *Historia ecclesiastica* 1.15 ff.

[32] Rufinus von Aquileia, *De principiis, praefatio* 6.

[33] Facundus, *Defensio* 1, *praefatio* 2.

[34] J. Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (Frankfurt am Main 1990[18]).

dem hier betrachteten spätantiken Fall eine Klerikergruppe; die von Facundus publizierten Texte waren allerdings keine Texte für den rein innerkirchlichen Gebrauch, sondern öffentliches Gut. Ohnehin war die spätantike Tendenz zur literaturgestützten Diskussion und Polemik nicht auf klerikale Experten beschränkt, auch wenn diese intellektuell stark dominierten. Dies läßt sich hier nur exemplifizieren: Elizabeth Clark hat in ihrem Buch *The Origenist Controversy: the Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate*[35] die Atmosphäre und soziale Realität einer literarisch-öffentlichen Polemik im Rom des späten vierten Jahrhunderts n. Chr. eindringlich vor Augen geführt, indem sie die ‚Netzwerke', Parteiungen, Verquickungen von politischen und theologisch-literarischen Interessen untersucht, wozu vor allem die hieronymianische Korrespondenz reiches Material an die Hand gibt.[36] Hier trifft man jene instutionalisierten Kommunikationsformen und ernsthafte Thematisierung literarisch vermittelter Gegenstände an, die sich in klassischen (‚vor-spätantiken') Texten praktisch nicht finden (vgl. oben die einleitenden Bemerkungen). Eine explizite Benennung der Streitpunkte findet sich beispielsweise in der 124. Epistel des Hieronymus, wo unter anderem die Subordination des Sohnes in der Dreifaltigkeit, die Präexistenz der menschlichen Seele vor der Geburt, die Leugnung der physischen Auferstehung (durch Origines), die zeitliche Begrenztheit der Höllenstrafen und zahlreiche Streitgegenstände mehr genannt werden. Andere Kontroversen finden sich etwa in den oben schon angeführten Quellen (siehe *Resonanz auf Verlautbarungen* und *Textbezogenheit des neuen debattierenden Stils*). Zahlreiche weitere Beispiele ließen sich ohne Schwierigkeiten anführen, doch die Begrenztheit des Raumes drängt dazu, in der Argumentation fortzufahren.

Die literarische Debattenkultur der Spätantike als partielle Antizipation ‚bürgerlicher' Kommunikationstypen

Literatur, oder nüchterner gesagt, publizierte Texte, waren das wichtigste Instrument der frühbürgerlichen Emanzipation vom absolutistischen

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[35] E. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: the Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton 1992).

[36] In analoger Weise nutzt S. Mratschek die Korrespondenz des Paulinus von Nola; *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola. Kommunikation und soziale Kontakte zwischen christlichen Intellektuellen* (Göttingen 2002).

Fürstenstaat, dessen ‚absoluter' Anspruch in argumentierenden oder ‚räsonierenden' Publikationen seit der frühen Neuzeit und zunehmend aggressiver im 18. Jahrhundert infragegestellt wurde.[37] Die im vorhergehenden beschriebenen Phänomene waren im Vergleich zu der Entwicklung der bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit allenfalls erste Schritte. Es ließe sich sogar einwenden, daß sich seit dem dritten Jahrhundert eine wachsende Theologisierung der Literatur und damit einhergehend eine zunehmende Entpolitisierung beobachten lasse. Wenn man vornehmlich die Inhalte der Literatur betrachtet, ist dies selbstverständlich eine unmittelbar einleuchtende Feststellung. Richtet man jedoch das Augenmerk auf die Kommunikationsmodi und die Relevanz, trifft genau das Umgekehrte zu. Während die politische Literatur der klassischen Antike im Grunde nie zu öffentlicher Bedeutung im eigentlichen Sinn gelangte, durchdrang die theologische Literatur der Spätantike den öffentlichen Raum mit einer nie gekannten Intensität. Insofern ‚politisierte' sie sich.

Das Phänomen gewinnt noch mehr Relief, wenn man die Parallele zur Neuzeit zieht. Die Eroberung des öffentlichen Raumes durch die Literatur vollzog sich zunächst (augenfällig im Zeitalter der Konfessionalisierung) auf religiösem Gebiet. Noch in den Jahren 1723–27 waren in Frankreich 35% der (der relativ giöste Anteil) Publikationen mit der Affirmation oder Widerlegung bestimmter Dogmen befaßt.[38] Erst im Laufe des Jahrhunderts nahmen säkulare Themen – Fiskalität, politische Ökonomie, politische Legitimation und andere – zunehmend mehr Raum ein. Es wäre jedoch ein modernisierendes Mißverständnis anzunehmen, Religion sei in der Vormoderne kein politisches Thema gewesen. Das Gegenteil ist der Fall. Dies hängt unter anderem damit zusammen, daß sich die Regime – dies gilt für den spätantiken Staat genauso wie für die Anciens Régimes Europas – in eine göttlich-kosmische Ordnung fest eingebettet sahen. Diese Ordnung, deren Dasein und Sosein bis in die Einzelheiten Gott selbst garantierte, auch nur in Details in Frage zu stellen, bedeutete, ihre Legitimität unmittelbar anzugreifen. Doch spielen hier noch weitere Dinge eine Rolle. Es bedurfte in einer religiös gestimmten Welt zunächst des theologischen Mediums, um grundsätzliche Probleme in den öffentlichen Raum zu

[37] Habermas 1990, a.a.O. (Anm. 34).

[38] H.-J. Martin, ‚Une croissance séculaire', in *Idem.* (Hrsg.), *Histoire de l'édition française*, Bd. 2, (Paris 1984[1]), 95–103, 100.

tragen. Der frühmoderne Streit um den Jansenismus umschloß immer auch eine grundsätzliche Kontroverse um Freiheit und Verantwortung des Individuums. In der Exilliteratur der Hugenotten wurde vermittels einer theologischen Sprache die Frage thematisiert, wie weit die Rechte des Staates in das private Leben seiner Untertanen reichen durften.[39] Viele weitere Beispiele ließen sich anführen. Doch hier ist vor allem von Interesse, daß die theologischen Argumentationen der Spätantike ein ähnliches Potential entfalteten, grundsätzliche politische Fragen in religiöser Sprache zu thematisieren. Wenn etwa Gregor von Nazianz Julian vorwarf, sich mit dem Rhetorenedikt am *logos*, der artikulierten Vernunft, zu vergreifen, der allen Menschen, ob Christen oder nicht, in gleicher Weise gehöre und über den ein Kaiser nicht zu gebieten habe, so schlägt er einen Ton an, der ohne Abstriche von Philosophen der Aufklärung akzeptiert worden wäre.[40] Die dritte symmachische Relation thematisiert das Problem der Gewissensfreiheit des Einzelnen im Angesicht des Staates. Facundus von Hermiane rechnet Justinian ganz explizit vor, daß im Kern der Drei-Kapitel-Streit über die Frage ausgetragen werde, ob der Kaiser in kirchlichen Dingen Kompetenzen besitze. Die *Defensio* enthält präzise Überlegungen hinsichtlich der Grenze zwischen staatlicher und kirchlicher Macht.[41] Und noch einmal, solche Erörterungen erhielten ihre besondere Brisanz dadurch, daß die Kaiser, auch Justinian, in publizierten Texten an der Debatte teilnahmen und argumentativ ihre Rolle im Staat zu begründen suchten.

Erste Schritte in Richtung auf Entstehung einer literarischen Öffentlichkeit, die als Kontrollmoment gegenüber staatlicher Autorität fungierte, wurden in der Spätantike getan. Über diese ersten Schritte hinaus gelangte die spätantike Zivilisation nicht mehr. Dissense zwischen der Regierung und Untertanen wurden in der Regel nur über theologische Fragen oder doch im theologischem Gewand ausgetragen, die Autoren waren häufig Spezialisten aus den Reihen des Klerus, und die Kreise, innerhalb derer auf hohem Niveau über die jeweiligen Probleme diskutiert und polemisiert wurde, blieben in der Regel zahlenmäßig recht klein. Trotz dieser erheblichen Einschränkungen läßt sich kaum leugnen, daß in der spätrömischen Gesellschaft Frühstadien jener Entwicklung

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[39] Vgl. E. Haase, *Einführung in die Literatur des Refuge. Der Beitrag der französischen Protestanten zur Entwicklung analytischer Denkformen am Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin 1959).

[40] Gregor von Nazianz, *oratio* 4.4.

[41] Vgl. Facundus, *Defensio* 12.2. ff.

zu beobachten sind, die in der frühen Neuzeit erneut einsetzte und schließlich in der entwickelten bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit des 19. Jahrhunderts kulminierte. In dem letzten Abschnitt soll noch eine Reflexion über das Ursachengefüge, das zu dieser partiellen Antizipation führte, angestellt werden.

Analogien in den Bedingungsgefügen, die die Entstehung ‚literarischer Öffentlichkeiten' begünstigt haben

Der größte Teil vormoderner Staatsbudgets war für militärische Zwecke reserviert. Wenn aufgrund äußeren Drucks oder politischer Fehlentscheidungen die militärischen Ressourcen eines Staates überbeansprucht wurden, setzten krisenhafte Entwicklungen ein. Die frühneuzeitlichen Fürstenstaaten und ihre historischen Nachfolger reagierten, wenn sie fiskalisch in die Enge getrieben waren, in der Regel mit erhöhtem Steuerdruck und der Aufnahme von öffentlichen Krediten, bei Verschärfung von Krisen mit Staatsbankrotten. Evolutionär oder revolutionär führte dieses Verhalten der staatlichen Zentralen zur Etablierung von Parlamenten, in denen die Gläubiger der Staatsmacht ein Wort über die Verwendung der von ihnen kreditierten Gelder mitzureden beanspruchten.

Der öffentliche Kredit blieb in der Spätantike ein völlig unterentwickeltes Instrument, die prozessierenden Münzverschlechterungen bilden jedoch eine Art unvollkommenes Analogon, denn die kaiserliche Zentrale forderte, insofern vergleichbar einer verschuldeten Staatsmacht, von ihren Untertanen ‚Vertrauen' in ihr effektives Fortbestehen und ihre Garantiegewalt für ein Geld, das außerhalb der Reichsgrenzen nur geringen oder keinen Wert hatte. Der Steuerdruck ist in der Spätantike fühlbar gestiegen, die Angewiesenheit der Herrscher auf die regelmäßigen Geldeingänge machte sie ebenso abhängig von der Kooperationsbereitschaft der Untertanen, wie die neuzeitlichen Fürsten von der Leistungsfähigkeit und Kooperation ‚ihrer Bürger'.[42] Der Legitimationsdruck erhöhte sich, und die Herrscher beider Zeitalter begannen, in zunehmend umfangreicheren Publikationen ihre Politik

[42] Vgl. zu dem Sachverhalt und dem Ursachengefüge P. Eich, *Zur Metamorphose des politischen Systems in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Berlin 2005), 364 ff.

zu erläutern.[43] Damit war eine Art unfreiwilliger Einladung zur Diskussion erfolgt, die Adressaten spürten, vielleicht mehr intuitiv als reflektiert, ihre steigende Wichtigkeit und die wachsende Abhängigkeit der Regierungen. In beiden Zeitaltern, Spätantike und früher Neuzeit, drückte sich das gewachsene Selbstbewußtsein der Untertanen zunächst vordringlich in einem wachsenden Willen zur religiösen Kontestation aus. Die Gründe für diese Priorität des Theologischen aufzudecken, erforderte eine sorgfältige sozialpsychologische Untersuchung, für die hier der Raum fehlt. Es muß hier genügen, das historische Faktum als solches zu konstatieren. Die spätantike Gesellschaft konnte sich bis zur militärischen Katastrophe des Reiches nicht aus der Fixierung auf theologische Debatten lösen, den frühmodernen Gesellschaften gelang die allmähliche Verlagerung der publizistischen Auseinandersetzungen auf die thematischen Gebiete, denen sie ihre soziale Entstehung verdankten: Fiskalität und ökonomische Organisation. Dieser Transfer gelang in der Antike, wie gesagt, noch nicht. Das muß im Grunde nicht überraschen. Die im Vollsinne ernsthafte literarische Auseinandersetzung über Themen von öffentlichem Rang und damit die implizite Anerkennung des Grundsatzes, daß die Ordnung der Gesellschaft nicht unumstößlich durch Herkommen gesichert ist, sondern ein Gegenstand argumentativ geformter Willensbildung sein kann, ist eine sehr späte und einmalige historische Erscheinung. Daß Vorformen – unter den frühneuzeitlichen analogen Umständen – in der Spätantike entstanden, ist ein Faktum, das registriert zu werden verdient.

Passau, September 2006

[43] Zur Spätantike vgl. A. Eich und P. Eich 2004, a.a.O. (Anm. 5), 81 ff.; zur Neuzeit beispielsweise K.M. Baker, ‚Politique et opinion publique sous l'Ancien Régime', *Annales (ESC)* 42 (1987), 41–72, 42 ff.

EPILOGUE

MAPPING THE CRISIS OF THE THIRD CENTURY

John Nicols

The Greek philosopher and sophist Protagoras would surely not mind this reuse of one of his most famous statements. "Concerning the crisis of the third century, I have no means of knowing whether there was one or not, or of what sort of a crisis it may have been. Many things prevent knowledge including the obscurity of the subject and the brevity of human life."[1] Within these proceedings one finds striking disagreement about whether there was a crisis as the term has been conventionally understood. And, if there was one, when did it begin? Dictionaries define our word crisis as: "An unstable condition, as in political, social, or economic affairs, involving an impending abrupt or decisive change". During the years 235 to 285, the Roman Empire surely did enter a period of instability. The patterns of 'emperor making and breaking' and of barbarian invasion during this period mark in my estimation the characteristics of a major political crisis. Indeed, when one compares the overall stability of the Roman imperial system and government of the mid-second to that of the mid-third century, the differences are readily apparent both in terms of leadership and defense.[2] In sum, that there was a 'crisis' is a fundamental assumption of this paper; but it is also a demonstrable proposition. I am moreover especially concerned here not only how to understand the nature of the crisis as a complex set of related events, but also how to explain the complexities of the crisis to others, especially to students.

One has only to read the standard textbooks on the subject to get a sense of the problem that has been examined within these proceedings. Some historians overwhelm the reader with details on the lives of emperors elevated and eliminated. Other historians try to grapple with the equally obscure accounts of the crisis as preserved in the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae.* That the 'lives' of emperors for the period 238–252

[1] Originally in reference to the existence of the gods, *DK* 80b4 (*DK* refers to the edition by H.A. Diels and W. Kranz (eds.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin 1966–1967).

[2] On this issue see Wim Jongman's contribution in this volume.

are missing from this collection does not facilitate the discussion. Mapping the crisis in a cartographic sense does, in my opinion, bring some much needed clarity to the problem, and that is the contribution of this paper. Here I am taking what economists would rightly label a macro approach to the crisis. In particular, I hope that by both mapping the events and graphing some of the factors we can arrive at a representation of the problem that focuses on the critical issues and also is comprehensible to students. It is also my hope that such an account may provide some guidance for scholars attempting to place their studies of individual elements into a larger perspective.

Generally speaking, the crisis had internal and external dimensions. As noted above, the most visible signs of the crisis were:

- the readiness of the soldiers to make and break emperors [a variant of the *arcanum imperii* thesis of Tacitus], and
- the increasingly invasive barbarian intrusions deep into the Roman Empire.

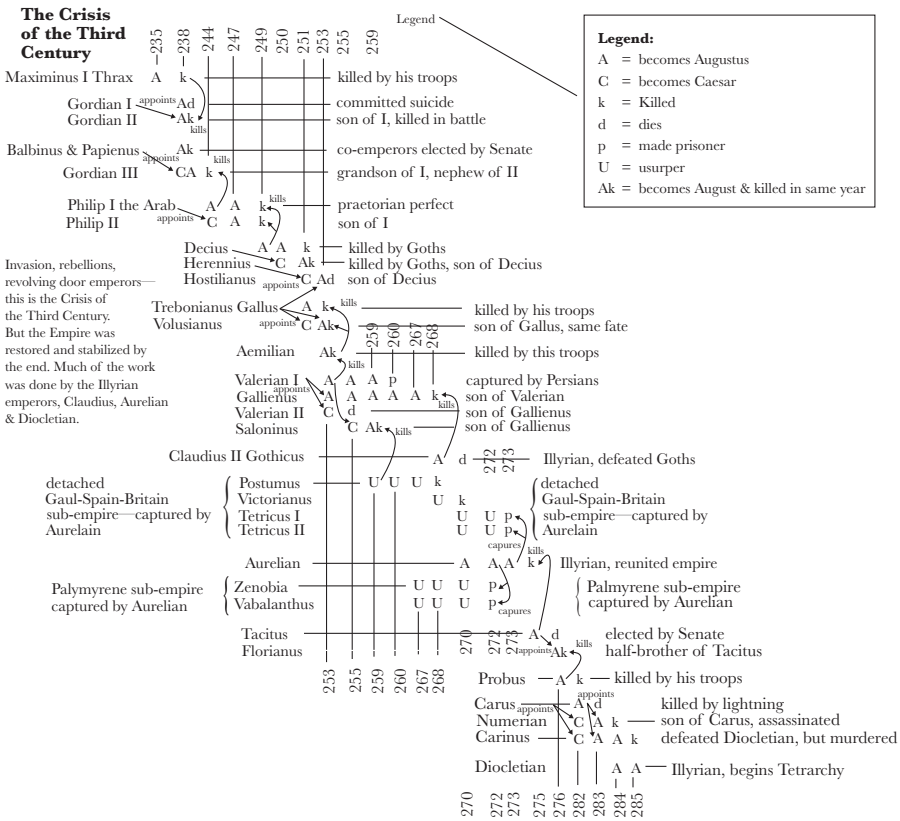
Indeed the two phenomena are closely related: increasing pressure on the frontiers made the martial prowess of the army more essential to the survival of the Empire, just as the readiness of the armies to compete with one another, each to place its own man at the head of the state, served to weaken the ability of the army to defend the Empire. How did these factors interact? And was one more important than, or prior to the other?

To understand what follows it is important for the reader to turn to the Mapping History site on the Internet. This project, supported by grants from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and various private donors in the United States, provides a set of interactive and animated maps on a variety of historical problems. The URL is: http://mappinghistory.uoregon.edu.

Open the section devoted to European history, and select the module entitled "Crisis of the third Century". The two elements mentioned above, namely emperor making and invasions, have been summarized in a variety of maps and charts. Following a brief introduction to the problem (I), the user turns to a set of maps (II) that illustrates the ebb and flow along the frontiers. From the principate of Augustus until the mid second century, it was the Romans who took the initiative on the frontiers. From 150 until about 230, the frontiers stabilized and a rough balance of power was established. After 240, the Roman frontiers broke down at many points from the North to the Black Seas and beyond. In the following section (III) the course of the third century is

displayed in more detail. Most importantly, the sequence of events is displayed in a manner that lends support to the theory that it was first and foremost the breakdown of internal order that undermined the defense of the empire. Thereafter (IV), data are presented that summarize visually many of the chief components of the crisis. Specifically, we consider the changes in wages of soldiers [rising], the silver content of coinage [declining], and changes in climate that might have affected the barbarians along the northern frontier. Finally we offer a general model to explain the crisis.

Before going into the details of the module, it is worth considering how the basic problems are typically represented. Regarding the changes in regime, consider the attached chart (reused with permission of the author Kelley Ross). Here the details can overwhelm even an advanced student. When I show this chart to students who are uninitiated into the study of the crisis, their immediate response is: "It is a mess! Do I have to know the details?"



More to the point: After the stable transfer of power during the second century, the readiness of the armies to replace the emperor violently is striking and undeniable. The events of 41, 69, 96 and 193 certainly may be perceived as anticipating the wave of imperial assassinations that characterize the mid third century. Nonetheless the earlier events, though in some cases traumatic, had been brief and in each case the imperial system had stabilized and produced yet another generation of stability. In this sense the events of the third century have to be seen as a categorical departure from the earlier pattern [see below].

Regarding the invasions, consider this map.

Admittedly, the map itself covers a much longer period than the one under discussion, but the problem is the same, namely the map (and others like it) gives the impression that the European part of the Roman Empire was subject to constant invasion over a two hundred year period.[3] Yet this scenario clearly exaggerates the nature of the crisis in respect to invasions. We are not dealing with continuous and devastating incursions, but rather with raids that affected certain parts of the Empire more dramatically than others. Moreover, it is readily apparent that many parts of the Empire had no direct contact with the invaders. Of course, this is not to deny that anxiety about invasion was wide-spread or that those who were spared direct attacks, were unaffected by disaster elsewhere.[4]

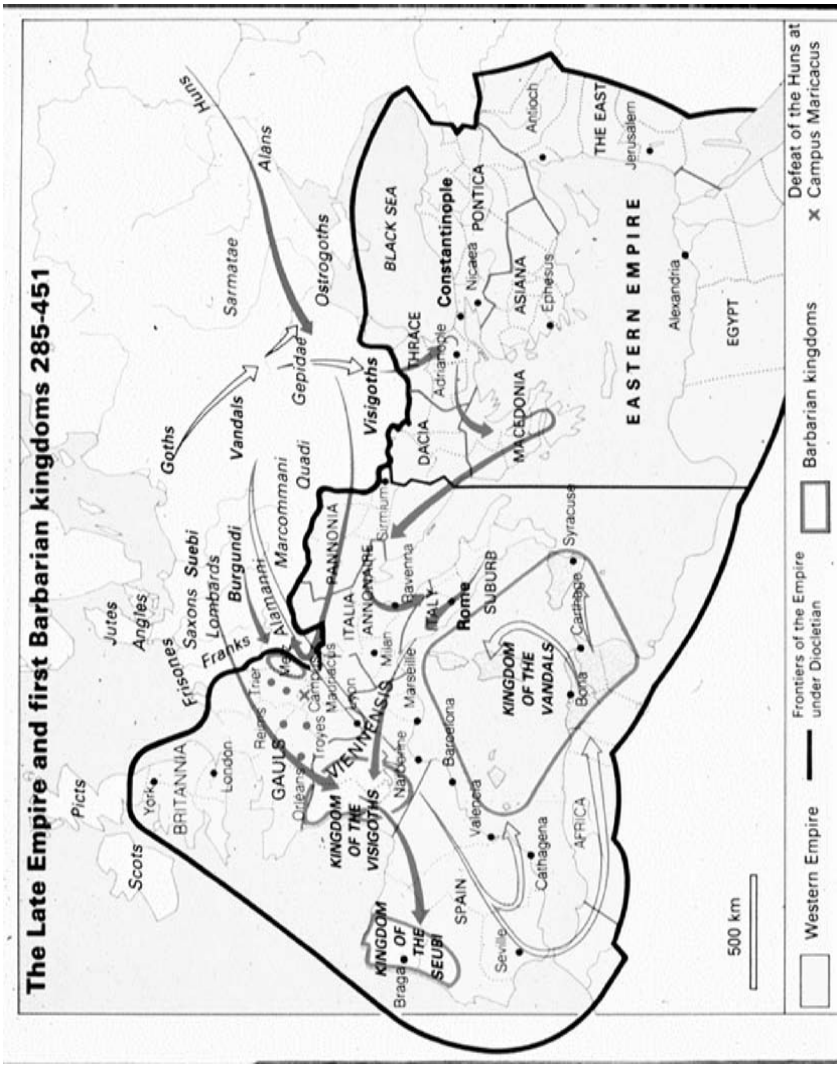
In the Mapping History project, we have tried to expand on the conventional representations of the problems in two ways. First, we have developed animated maps that illustrate the evolution of the problem more effectively than static maps can. Second, we have tried to use a variety of graphic images to illustrate the underlying nature of the historical problem.[5]

A closer look at the period from 200 to 285 (III) provides more insight into the problem. In this set of maps, we illustrate both the events on the frontiers and the emperor-making tendencies of the Roman armies. As the crisis evolves, it is more and more apparent that the emperor 'making and breaking' was already frequent before the major barbarian incursions penetrated deeply and widely into the

[3] This map has been circulating on the internet for many years, and I have not been able to trace its origin or credit its author.

[4] Cf. for instance the article by Werner Eck in these proceedings.

[5] What I am presenting is best labeled as a 'work in progress' and, indeed, I welcome suggestions that would enhance the product.


The Late Empire and first Barbarian kingdoms 285-451
Huns
Alans
Sarmatae
Ostrogoths
Gepidae
Visigoths
Goths
Vandals
Marcommani
Quadi
Suebi
Burgundi
Lombards
Saxons
Frisones
Franks
Alamanni
Jutes
Angles
Picts
Scots
York
BRITANNIA
London
GAULS
Orleans
Reims
Trier
Troyes
Campus
Madriacus
Lyon
VIENNENSIS
KINGDOM OF THE VISIGOTHS
KINGDOM OF THE SEUBI
Braga
SPAIN
Seville
Cathagena
Valencia
Barcelona
Narbonne
Marseille
Milan
ITALIA
ANNONAIRE
PANNONIA
Sirmium
Ravenna
ITALY
Rome
SUBURB
KINGDOM OF THE VANDALS
Bona
Carthage
Syracuse
AFRICA
DACIA
THRACE
Adrianople
Constantinople
Nicaea
PONTICA
ASIANA
Ephesus
MACEDONIA
BLACK SEA
Antioch
THE EAST
Jerusalem
EASTERN EMPIRE
Alexandria
EGYPT
500 km
Western Empire
Frontiers of the Empire under Diocletian
Barbarian kingdoms
Defeat of the Huns at Campus Maricacus

empire. Of course to many historians this will not come as a startling revelation, but the representation here provides, we believe, a more intuitive sense of the process.

Even if we can map the crisis more effectively and generate a more compelling representation of the sequence of events, we still want to know what prompted the changes. The final section of the module (IV) summarizes some of the factors that historians have introduced to explain both the internal and external dimensions of the problem.[6]

The first tab graphs the relationship between soldiers' wages and the content of silver in Roman coinage. As the wages treble, the silver content dropped from 90 to 30% and then sank even lower. As the Roman soldiers themselves were responsible for so much of the violence and demanded ever greater bonuses, it is reasonable to believe that whatever gain the soldiers made in terms of pay was undermined by the decline in silver content in their wages. Admittedly, it is not easy or necessary to claim that one was the cause of the other; but the demands for ever higher wages, and the degradation in the real value of those wages, may have demoralized the soldiers and encouraged the cycle of violence.

The second tab graphs another indicator, namely the higher cost of imperial administration. One of the strategies that the emperors used to minimize the potential internal revolt was to increase the number of provinces and to make each smaller. In theory, then, the potential rebel would find it more difficult to secure the support needed to challenge the status quo. Indeed, as the crisis deepens, the number of provinces increases dramatically, indeed doubling during the critical years between A.D. 180 and 300. Whether the doubling of provinces actually doubled the costs of the imperial system is not clear, but it is readily apparent that the administrative structure changes as the crisis deepens and that there must have been some costs associated with the shift.

The third tab provides data on the changes of climate, primarily in the regions that drain into the Black Sea. The congruence between a relatively more benevolent climate in the first and second centuries and the peace and stability of the years of the principate stands in contrast

[6] The scholarship on these tabs derives from a variety of publications, the most important of which are K. Greene, *The Archaeology of the Roman Economy*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1986); H.H. Lamb, *Climate, History and the Modern World* (London and New York 1982); and P.D. Jones and M.E. Mann, "Climate over Past Millenia" *Reviews of Geophysics* 42 (2002), 1–42.

to the comparably unfavorable conditions during the third century, suggesting that a changing and less benevolent climate may have been a factor in driving the northern barbarians to enter the Roman Empire. Again, it is difficult to make the case that changes in climate could be the sufficient cause to explain the movement of barbarians during this period, but when taken together with the other factors represented here, a more coherent pattern of cause and effect may be deduced.

In the final section we offer a model to explain the process. During the first and second centuries there were sufficient resources/surpluses available to cover the cost of defense and the development of the urban infrastructure. As the costs of government rose, the surpluses were transferred to cover the rising costs of defense, especially the demands of the military. As the crisis deepened, more resources were pulled out of the cities and we begin to see a genuine process of urban decline.

Of course, these are not all of the factors that may have affected the events of the third century. Regarding the role of the army, for example, the pattern of recruitment especially after A.D. 200 suggests that the soldiers were being drawn increasingly from the provinces, and perhaps also from less urban and less civilized contexts.[7] In this case, they may have been less sensitive to the nuances of the Augustan settlements and the need to preserve the *arcanum imperii*.[8] Even then, it is not readily apparent why the events of 69 and of 193 failed to produce the kind of chain reaction that characterized the events of the mid third century. In the next phase of development of this module, the material relative to the recruitment of the legions will be incorporated into the model.[9]

In sum, the Mapping History project offers a system to illustrate those historical problems that lend themselves to this kind of cartographic representation. Though funding was originally provided to make available material for instructional purposes, there is no reason why the same structure cannot be employed to illustrate the scholarly data on other historical problems.

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[7] G. Forni, *Il recrutamento delle legioni da Augusto a Diocleziano* (Rome 1953).

[8] The argument of M. Rostovtzeff in the *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1957).

[9] As stated before, this is work in progress and I am interested in suggestions that may help address this and related problems.

INDEX

Abolition of memory 85 n. 27, 268, 267
Abrittus 106
Abrochia 205–206
Accessibility 271
Acclamation 323 n. 29, 328
  as Imperator 64, 329
  formulas 332
Account money 250
Achaia 27, 113, 124
Ad edictum praetoris 265
Adaeratio 227, 228
Adulis 242
Aemilius Aemilianus 116
Aemulatio, aristocratic 69, 70, 72
Aerarium 224
Africa 5, 26–27, 48–49, 57–60, 106, 108, 114–116, 118, 120, 122–124, 222–225, 231, 272
Ager Gallicus 166
Ager per mensura extremitatem comprehensus 230
Ager publicus 157
Aggregate income 185
Aggregate production 197
Agricola, life of 106
Agricultural change 197
Agricultural decline 197
Agrippina 89 n. 35
Aila 235
Ala Contariorum 101
Alamans 104
Alani 102
Albano 103
Alexander of Aphrodisias 408, 409
Alexandria 236, 371, 408
Allectus 53, 54, 55
Ammianus Marcellinus 145–147, 149
Amplificator 272
Anatolia, inhabitants of 107
Animal bones assemblages 191
  in Roman Italy 192
  in the provinces 191
Annales 184
Antiochia (Syria) 34, 134, 136, 295 n. 11, 303, 306, 307 n. 59, 308, 371
Antonine Plague 7, 195, 197, 201–217
  demographic effect 195
  in Egypt 204–206
Antoniniani 247, 251, 252, 256, 286–288, 300, 303–306
Antoninus Pius 26, 199, 298, 369
Apamea (Syria) 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 106
Aphrodisias 35
Appianus 157
Apollodorus of Damascus 146
Apollonius of Tyana 397, 399
Appointment policy 112
Aqueducts 186
Arabia 264, 269
Area Palatina 329
Arenas 186
Argenteus 257
Arius 417
Army pay 250
Arrien de Nicomédie 102, 103
Ascension to the throne 327–336
Asia Minor 27, 113, 122–123, 133, 137, 148 n. 42, 203, 220–224, 227, 253
Assaria 253
Assayers 246–247
Asses 253
Assidui 158, 161, 162
Athens 371, 399, 402, 406
  inhabitants of 406, 408
Atmospheric metal pollution 189
Attalus 156
Atticus, A. 106
Attius Suburanus, Sex. 68
Augustae 267, 302
Augustus 23, 67, 70, 71, 162, 164, 262, 263, 298
  Res Gestae 78–80
Aula 331
Aurei 248, 249, 250, 254
Aurelianianus 256
Aurelianus 17, 51, 73, 107, 108, 118–119, 122, 295 n. 11, 249, 256–257
  currency reform 256
Aurelius Theokritos 320, 322

Aurelius Victor 98
Aureus 252, 253, 256, 257
Avidius Cassius, C. (*suff.* 166?) 125, 127, 132–134, 136, 138

Baebius Massa 75
Bagnall, R. 205
Balbinus 287, 433
Balkans 99, 101
Ballista (artillery) 141, 145, 148, 149, 150
Ballista (praef. praet. of Valerianus) 107
Bank 250
Bank money 245
Bankers 247, 253–255
Basilica Nova 73, 74
Bataves 104, 370
Berenike 234
Bichapour 106
Bildung, see also education 400, 402, 405, 408, 410
Black Death 185, 201, 205–207
Black Sea 432, 436
Bolsena 272
Bona castrensia 368
Bona paganica 368
Bonosus 52
Bourgeoisie 184
Bremenium 266
Brenner, B. 198
Bretagne 107–108
Bretagnes 107
Britannia 46–48, 51–52
  division of 46
Brittones 49
Brown, P. 183
Building activity 26, 38, 53, 189, 212–214
Bullion 245, 246, 254
Burgundians 48, 51

Caesar (as name) 68, 70
Caesar 23, 37, 62, 68, 70, 80, 86, 271, 292, 297–306, 308
Caesonii 111
  Caesonius Bassus 119
  Caesonius Macer Rufinianus, C. 112
  Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus, L. 115
  Caesonius Ovinius Manlius Rufinianus Bassus, L. 117
Caledonia 45
Caledonians 49, 55
Campania 158
Candidatus 115
Cappadocia 102
Caracalla 45, 46, 48, 49, 99, 100, 101, 114–115, 122, 265, 266, 267, 312, 315–326, 333, 367, 369, 371
Carausius 53, 54
Carinus 52, 118, 303, 305, 433
Carus 118, 303, 305, 433
Cassius Longinus, L. 155
Castrum 329
Cato 160
Censors 163–164, 168, 170, 172–174, 179, 222
Census 162, 172–174, 178–179, 181, 215
  figures 162–165, 168–170, 178, 181, 215
  figures, augustan 172, 174, 179
  decentralized 173–174
Ceremony 328
Cheiroballistra 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 150
Cheques 245
China 184
Christian texts 12, 13, 419–420
Christianity 199, 359
Chronological resolution 193
Chronology of archaeological finds 190
Cicero 414
Cimbric war 156
Citizenship 198, 370–371
Civilis princeps 263, 264, 272
Civitates decumanae 226
Civium capita 180
Claudius 89 n. 35, 292, 330
Claudius Gothicus 262, 272, 433
Claudius Pulcher, Ap. 155, 164
Climate 195, 196
Clodius Albinus 114, 263, 280
Clysma 238
Codex Justinianus 369, 371, 374, 376
Codex Théodisianus 269
Codices Gregorianus and Hermogenianus 358
Coin hoards 284
Coin types 285
Coinage 17, 32, 34–38, 40–41, 49–50, 52, 54, 196, 227, 229, 245–257, 276, 280–309, 433
  martelage 266, 270
Coloni 198

Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium (CCAA), see also Köln 30, 34, 35, 37, 43
Comes 114
Commodus 72, 111, 113, 275, 298, 332
Concordia 271
Conditor 269, 272
Consecratio 297
Constantius Chlorus 262, 269, 272
Constantinus I 17, 55, 73, 74, 103, 237, 261, 262, 269, 270, 272, 315, 316 n. 15, 359, 372
  Arch of 272
Constantinople 74, 328, 331, 333–334, 419, 423
  Hebdomon 328
  Hippodrome 328
Constantius I 54, 55
Constitutio Antoniniana 9, 198, 360, 361, 364, 371
Control of an imperial mint 306
Coptos 240
Corpus Iuris Civilis 370
Cosa 158, 164
Cost of wage labour 187
Cremna 148, 149
Crimen maiestatis 269
Cultores 268
Curator 24, 78, 113–118, 120, 122, 124, 137 n. 35
  curator alvei Tiberis 114
  curator rei publicae 113
Curia 329
Currency 245, 246, 248
Currency decree 257
Cursus honorum 118

Dacia 101, 108, 126, 268, 295 n. 10
Dalmates 104
Dalmatia 108
Darab 106
De Calataÿ, F. 188
Debasement 196, 246 n. 4, 247
Decennalia 340
Decius, see also Traianus Decius 116, 302, 303, 306, 433
  persecution 13
Decline 16, 157–158, 163, 167–169, 177, 183, 185–188, 190–191, 193, 195–199, 202, 209, 216, 237–238, 240, 243, 246, 355, 359–360, 365, 371, 408–409
Decumani 224
Deditio 230
Demographic history 186
Demographic transition 184
Denarii 246–247, 251–253, 257
Designation 329
Devaluation 256
Devictor 272
Diet 191
  quality of 193
Digest 269, 356, 359, 362–363, 371
Dio Cassius 12, 13, 99, 100, 101, 263–265, 268
Diocletianus 3, 23, 30, 52, 54, 55, 73, 111, 125, 199, 237, 271, 275, 312, 315, 324 n. 33, 358, 359, 433
  reforms 249, 256, 257
Diogenes of Oinoanda 407
Discontinuity 184
Discours 265, 273
Disease 196
Divus 265–266
  divae 266
  diva memoria 269
  divina lex 269
  divine association 286
  divinum iudicium 269
Dokimastai 255
Domar 187
Domestic animals 191
Domitianus 72, 292, 299, 304, 370
Domitius Corbulo, Cn. (*suff.* 39) 128–130, 133
Domus 267
Domus Augusta 266
Donatistenstreit 421
  Drei Kapitel 419, 423
Donau 27, 35
Drachmae 253
Drains 186
Duncan-Jones, R.P. 195, 197, 210–211
Dusandria 177
Dutch Republic 186

Economy
  change 188
  growth 184, 191
  recovery 199
Edessa 106
Edictum Diocletiani 257, 266
Education, see also Bildung 87
  legal 358
  Lehrstühle, see Philosophy 402, 406, 408

Egypt 107, 122, 127, 133, 196, 204–207, 233–236, 242, 247, 250–251, 253, 256, 311–326
Elite 14, 18, 24, 87, 112, 123, 157, 187, 198, 202, 233, 261, 351, 401, 405, 410–411
  family 111, 119, 121–123
  incomes 185, 197
Emesa, inhabitants of 104
England 186
Epallagè 254
Ephesus 253, 271
Epidemic 185
Epithet 311–326
Equilibrium 196
Equites singulares Augusti 105, 108
Exchange banks 254
Exchange commissions 254
Exchange rates 252, 253, 256
Exemplum 76, 80–81, 83–85

Face value 252, 254
Facundus of Hermiane 419
Faustina 267
Faustina the Younger 292, 298, 299, 307
Femur 194
Feriale Duranum 262
Finley, M.I. 183
Firmator 269
Fistulae aquariae 211
Flaminius, C. 166
Florus 367–369, 371–372
Fogel, R. 193
Forum Augusti 70
Forum boarium 267
Fragmenta Sinaitica 364
Franks 37, 41
Fronto 264
Fruits 191
Frumentum
  aestimationem 226 n. 38, 228 n. 46
  emptum 226
Fundator 269

Gaius 363
Galba 67, 68, 70
Gallia 17, 27, 107, 225, 339, 348, 350–351
  Lugdunensis 107
  Narbonnensis 107, 109
Gallic Empire, see Imperium Galliarum
Gallienus 6, 8, 23–24, 34–38, 40, 50, 98, 103–104, 107–109, 292, 304, 307, 315, 321, 323, 326, 337, 411
  legionary coin-issues 49
Genius 319, 320, 321, 324, 326
German peoples 28–29, 31–32, 36, 87, 103, 106
Germania 46, 49, 106–108, 113
  Inferior 35, 107
  Superior 114
Germanicus 127, 129, 134, 262
Geta 267–268, 287, 292, 320 n. 22, 322 n. 25
Gibbon, E. 16, 183, 365
Gordianus I 48, 59, 62, 287, 397, 433
Gordianus II 59, 61, 287, 433
Gordianus III 47–48, 62–65, 106, 116–117, 122, 287, 302, 398, 433
Gracchan land reforms 167, 170
Gracchus, Tib. 155, 156, 157, 158, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166
Gradus Palatii 329
Greek language 269, 362–364
Greenland 188
Grenoble 109
Gresham's law 249, 251, 252

Habermann, W. 205
Hadrian 34, 278, 299
  as builder 213
  Pantheon 72–74
  Hadrian's Wall 45, 374
Hatra 142, 143
Heliogabalus 114, 278
Herennius Etruscus 287
Herennius Senecio 75
Hero of Alexandria 146
Herodianus 12, 13, 99–102, 263–264, 268
Hispania Tarraconensis 108, 272
Historia Augusta 100
Historia Lausiaca 379–383, 385, 388, 390–391, 394
Hoards 247, 249, 250, 251
Honestiores 198
Hopkins, K. 188
Horster, M. 212–213
Hostilianus 287
Hostis publicus 265
Housing 186
Humiliores 198

Ice cores 188
Ideology 62, 64, 70, 74, 230, 270–271, 277–280, 282, 297, 313, 331, 337, 344–345, 347–349
of stability 291
Ideological war 348
Illiteracy 281
Illyria 97
Illyriens 108
Immunität von öffentlichen Leistungen 402
Imperator 263, 272
Imperial communications 393, 416
Imperial coinage 276, 291–293, 295, 297, 300, 306–307, 393
Imperial family 7, 283–284, 289–291, 293, 296, 304, 319
Imperial power 62, 64–65, 67, 71, 73, 77–78, 81–85, 88–90, 92, 118–119, 275, 277, 279–280, 282–284, 286, 288, 298, 303, 312, 315, 325, 329, 330–331, 334–335, 337, 341, 344–345, 348–350
Imperial representation 36, 270, 275, 277–282, 284–286, 288, 311–313, 315, 325
Imperial titulature 311–326
Imperium 23, 71, 86–88, 90–92, 127, 129–133, 137–138, 361
Imperium Galliarum 49–52, 300, 301, 337, 341–342, 348, 351
India 235
Industrial Revolution 184
Inflation 252, 256, 257
Innovations of legends and images 292
Inscriptions 8, 17, 18, 26, 46, 48–50, 52, 55, 63, 99–101, 103, 106, 109, 112–113, 115, 117–119, 134, 236, 238, 252–253, 266–268, 270, 280, 291
building inscriptions in Italy 209–214
Inswinging Theory 144
Interregional trade 187
Invictus 312, 349
Italy 26, 28–29, 32, 58–60, 65, 71, 73, 97, 113–114, 117, 120, 123, 158–160, 162–163, 166–168, 170–173, 175–178, 191, 193, 199, 204, 206–216, 219, 221, 254, 296, 348
population 162–164, 167, 170, 172, 178, 214–216
Iulia Domna 9, 267, 268, 292, 307, 397
Iulia Mammaea 267
Iulius Priscus, C. 125, 127, 132, 134–138

Jugurthine war 156, 162
Julianus 269
Julius Caesar 83, 221, 224–227, 229, 369
Julius Placidianus 109
Jurisprudenz 410
Justinianus 370, 373, 376, 419, 420
codification 355, 356
Digest 356, 359, 371
Novellae 363

Kaisergeschichte 52
Köln, see also CCAA 30, 38, 42–43, 301
Kollybos 253

Labour incomes 185
Labour productivity 185, 197
Laetitia 272
Lambaesis 268 n. 32
Land confiscation 165
Land-labour ratio 185, 197
Language of the law 362–364
Larhibôl 268
Late Antiquity 20, 195, 358, 397, 407, 413, 415–418, 421, 424–428
Legal tender 251, 254
Legio II Parthica 99, 100, 101, 103
Legio IV Scythica 101
Legio XII Fulminata 102
Legio XIII Gemina 101
Legio XV Apollinaris 102
Legitimation 57, 59–65, 69, 81–82, 84, 90, 123, 261–262, 268, 279–280, 311–312, 325, 328–331, 335, 337, 343, 345, 347, 350, 425, 427
Lesepublikum 413
Levy 161–162, 173
Lex de imperio Vespasiani 82–84
Licinius 270, 271, 272
Licinius Rufinus, M.Cn. 363
Licinius Stolo, C. 157
Life expectancy 184
Literaturrezeption 413
Litus Saxonicum 53

Lo Cascio, E. 203, 214–216
Longinus 398, 399 n. 8, 409
Longue durée 183
Lucius Verus 263, 264
Ludi saeculares 272
Lycia 129, 269

Macrinus 107, 263, 264, 265, 287
Maecius Laetus 324 n. 33
Malthusian scenario 177, 185
Manufacturing 187
Marcus Antonius 271–272
Marcus Aurelius 31, 48, 108, 112, 125, 132–134, 136, 261, 264, 275, 292, 298, 402, 403, 407–409
Marcus Valerius Maximianus 106
Marius 70, 158, 162
Market conditions 198
Market crops 186–187
Mater castrorum, senatus et patriae 267, 299 n. 24
Mater universi generis humani 267
Material culture 186
Maures 104
Maxentius 73, 272, 273
Maximianus 73, 271, 272, 273, 315
Maximinus 263
Maximinus Daia 417
Maximinus Thrax 108, 116, 433
Maximus Tyrus 404
Meat
  consumption 191
  health benefits 193
  income elasticity 193
Melitena 102
Memoria 70, 77 n. 8, 84, 261, 262, 266, 270, 272
Menander Rhetor 263, 266, 411 n. 46
Moesia 108
Moesia Superior 113, 126
Metal extraction 189
Milan 104
Military testament 367, 371–372
Mines 197
Mithraism 199
Mnaieia 254
Mnésichè 106
Mobilization rates 175
Modestinus 362, 363
Mommsen, Th. 202–203
Monarchical character of the regime 292
Monetary stock 196
Monetary theory 196
Money supply 189, 197
Monumentum 262
Mortality 196, 203, 209
Mucius Scaevola, P. 155
Mucius Scaevola, Q. 356
Musonius Rufus 406, 408
Myos Hormos 234

Naqs-i-Rustem 106
Naristes 106
Nemesianus 52
Nero (emperor) 67, 72, 84, 128, 130, 330, 292
Nerva 370
Nexum 160
Nominal values 256
Noricum 108
Noviomagus 30
Numantia 164
Numerianus 52, 118, 305, 433
Nummularii 255
Nummus 257
Nymphidius Sabinus 67

Obols 253
Octavianus 233, 272
Octavius, M. 155, 156
Odenathus 107
Onager 145–151
Oneirokritik 402
Oppresion 198
Orşova 143, 144, 145
Osrhoene, inhabitants of 104

Palace 330, 334, 335
Palmyra 107
  inhabitants of 104
Pamphlets 421
Pannonia 107, 108, 113, 128, 133
Pantheon 72–74
Papinianus 363, 409, 433
Papyri 311–326
Parens generis humani 265
Patrician 115
Patrocinium orbis terrae 220
Paulus 363, 409
Pentakontadrachma 254
Pepaideuómenoi 405
Per capita incomes 185, 191
Perception 280, 282, 311 n. 1, 312, 314 n. 7, 325
Periplus Maris Erythraei 234
perpetuus 269
Persépolis 106

Persians 102, 106
Pertinax 264, 327, 332
Philippus junior 287
Philippopolis 269
Philippus Arabs 116, 125, 134–137, 263, 264, 268–269, 433
Philo of Byzantium 146
Philosophical education 398–399, 406, 409–411
Philosophy 9, 398–406, 409–412
  Aristoteliker 407–409
  Cynici 401
  Epictetus 400, 406, 408
  Epicurus 403
  Epikureer 409
  Epikureismus 406, 407, 409
  Neuplatoniker 410–412
  Plato 400, 403, 404
  Platoniker 409
  Platonopolis 412
  Plotinus 398, 408, 411–412
  Sophists 406, 412
  Stoa 406, 407, 409
  Stoïcism 261
  Stoiker 409
Philostratus 397–399, 405–406, 412
Phrygia 35
Picts 45, 54, 55
Plague under Marcus Aurelius 201–217
Plautianus 267
Plautilla 267, 268, 299
Plautius 268
Plinius Caecilius Secundus, C. (*suff.* 100) 75, 129, 131–133, 138, 332, 400, 414
Plotina 334
Plural Augustorum 302
Plutarch 157
Polybius 163
Pomeranz, K. 184
Pompeus 271
Pons Milvius 272
Population 158–160, 162–172, 175–178, 180, 185, 187, 191, 197
  density 186
  pressure 177, 185–186, 191
Portoria 224–226
Portraits 271–270
Postumus 8, 37, 38, 40, 41, 49, 50, 104, 107, 300, 308, 337–351, 433
Pouvoir normatif 270
Praefectus urbi, iudicial task 116
Praetensio 46
Praetorian guard 329–330
Pre-industrial economic growth 186
Pre-industrial economy 199
Prices 196
  of slaves 187
Princeps 73, 81, 83, 88, 90–93, 272
  modèle augustéen 272
Princeps iuventutis legend 299–300, 303–305, 308
Princeps optimus 268
Principate 3, 8, 19, 67–74, 219, 225, 227, 230, 293, 299, 330, 335, 432, 436
  strains within 69–73
  weaknesses 67–69
Principia historiae 264
Privatus 265
Pro salute imperi 5, 34
Probus 48, 51, 52, 53, 118, 300, 301, 305, 308, 433
  vine edict 52
Proclamation 62–63, 264, 329
Proculus 52
Productivity 185
Projet tétrarchique 271
Proletarians 169–172
Proconsul Africae 118
Propaganda 278
Prosperity 186
Provinces 17, 26–29, 31, 35, 37, 43, 45–46, 49–52, 54, 57, 59–60, 62, 64, 97–98, 106–109, 111, 114, 116, 118, 120, 123, 125–139, 173, 183, 191–192, 219–231, 242, 296, 312, 314, 319, 321, 324–325, 349, 350, 436–437
Pseudo-Aelius Aristide 263–266, 268
Pseudo-Mamertin 262, 271
Public baths 186
Publicani 229
  societates publicanorum 224, 229
Pupienus 62–64, 287

Quantification 295
Quinquennales 340

Radiates 248, 256–257
Raetia 107
Rates of military participation 175–176
Rechtswissenschaft 409–411
Red Sea 233
Redemptores 229
Regii Emeseni Iudaei 104
Registration 169–170

Reichsrecht und Volksrecht 361, 362
Religion 199, 268–269, 425
  Roman 18, 71, 73
Renaissance 186
Rents 185
Reparator 269
Representation, see also Imperial representation 7, 275, 311, 312, 314 n. 7, 315, 323 n. 30, 325
Res Gestae Diui Saporis 106
Respublica 261
Restitutores orbis totius 268
Rhetoric 268, 402, 403, 404, 405, 411
Rhine 31, 32, 35, 37, 43, 103, 349
Ritual of accession 327–336
Roma 7, 12, 18, 27, 28, 58–65, 67–74, 79, 90, 103, 107, 119–120, 123, 128, 136, 186, 204, 207–208, 219, 224, 249, 255, 269, 272–273, 295–296, 302–305, 307, 314, 321, 323–324, 328–329, 338–343, 345–346, 350, 357, 364–365, 397, 406, 411–412
  Aeterna 70, 297
  aeternae memoriae 273 n. 56
  foundation myths 71–72
  public buildings 70–74
  rôle 73–74
Roman law 371, 374–377
  classical 355–365
Roman roads 186–187
Romula 268
Romulus 273
Rostovzeff, M. 202
Rural social relations 197

Sacralisation 7–8, 261–262, 266, 270, 337, 349–350
Sacratissimus 269
Sacrilegium 269
Saint Gregory the Miracle Worker 371
Saloninus 37, 287
Saltus Burunitanus 198
Sapor 106, 107
Sarmatians 48, 103
Sassanide cavalry 103
Satala 102
Sättigung an Gebäuden 214
Scheidel, W. 204–207
Scipio Aemilianus 155, 164
Scipio Nasica 156
Scriptura 224, 226
Second Punic War 157, 160, 161
Second serfdom 198
Senate 18, 60–65, 68, 71, 76, 80–81, 83–84, 88–89, 116, 126–127, 129–131, 133–134, 138, 222, 225–226, 228, 264, 267–268, 314, 320, 323, 329–332, 350
  career 111–122, 124, 138
  elite 112
Senate House 73, 329–333, 335
Senators 50, 67, 75, 90, 111, 113–114, 116–117, 120, 123, 155, 225, 264–265, 330, 335, 412
Senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone 261
Seneca 70, 261
Sennius Sollemnis 249
Septimius Severus 45–46, 98, 101, 113, 263, 267–268, 280, 292, 312, 315, 316, 317, 318, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 328, 368
Sextius, L. 157
Severan regime 199
Severus Alexander 17, 23, 30, 31, 49, 100, 114, 267, 333
Severus and Antoninus 316, 317, 319, 320
Shipwrecks 188
Sibylline oracles 203
Sicily 164, 219, 222–228, 231
Silver 197, 246–247, 249, 251–252, 254–257, 280, 286, 292, 296, 300, 436
Similitudo 271
Skeletal 194
Slave mode of production 158
Slaves 157, 160, 178, 183, 198
  demand and supply 157, 187, 198, 215
  number of 160
  prices 187, 191, 198
  in Italy 214–217
Smyrna 271
Sociability 199
Social equality 197
Social relations 199
South Etruria Survey 158, 159
Spain 27, 52, 67, 113, 122, 155, 219, 222, 228–231
St. John Lateran 74
Standard of living 185, 191, 193
Stark, R. 199
Statio principis 261, 262, 265, 266, 271
Statue, imperial 270
Stature data 193

Stipendiarii 222, 225, 227
Stipendiarium 219, 222, 223, 227–228
Stipendium 223, 227, 228
Strategos 254–255, 316–317, 319–320
Strobel, K. 203
Subelite 187
Subsistence 185
Sulla 70
Sulpicius Rufus, Ser. 356
Surface enrichment 246
Survey 176
Syria 101, 107, 128–129, 132, 135–136, 269, 363

Tabula Heracleensis 173, 180
Tabula Pameiobrigensis 230
Tacitus 70, 75–76, 80, 85–87, 106, 127–128, 355, 403, 432
Tacitus (emperor) 42, 118, 433
Taxes 7, 197, 219–231, 235–236, 239, 249
  vicesima, vicensuma 228
Tectricus 50, 433
Temples 186
  Mars Ultor 70
  Peace 71
  the Sun 73, 74
Tetradrachms 247, 251, 253, 255
Tetrarchs 55, 266, 268, 272
Tetrarchy 52, 98, 139, 262, 265, 270–271, 303
Thysdrus 48
Time series analysis 187
Titanianus 320, 321, 326
Titulature 266, 311–326
  impériales 268
Titus 292, 370
Total factor productivity 185
Town walls 53
Traditional values and images 293
Traianus 68, 72, 81, 130, 132, 241, 263, 264, 291, 292, 332, 370
  Forum of 72
Traianus Decius, see also Decius 106, 268
Transduriana 230
Transformation 3, 11, 15, 17, 18
Transhumant pasturage 160
Transition 3, 184
Transportation 199
Traumdeuter 402
Trebonianus Gallus 116, 306
Tributum ex censu 221, 225
Tributum soli 228
Trichrysa 254
Twelve Tables 355

Ulpianus 9, 265, 269, 363, 370–371, 409–410
Underregistration 181
Uranius Antoninus 104
Urbs 273
Usurpators 51, 54, 98, 284, 301, 345, 348
Usurpations 17, 52, 54, 57, 59, 65, 107, 116, 120, 123
Utica 272

Valaon 106
Valerianus 35, 37, 38, 106, 116, 304, 433
Valerius Maximianus, M. 106
Vandals 48, 51
Vectigal 221–224, 227–228
Vegetius 144, 145, 150
Veii 165
Velocity of circulation 196
Vertu 264
Vespasian 71, 292, 402
Vice Caesaris 118
Victorinus 50, 51, 300, 308
Villa Giulia 272
Vindolanda 47, 368, 370–371
Vipsanius Agrippa, M. 127
Virgilius 281
Visual programme 278
Vitae Sophistarum 397
Vitellius 68
Vitruvius 141, 145, 146, 149
Volusianus 306
Votis decennalibus 345

Wage data 191
Wage labour 187
Wall 46
Walldürn 49
Weather 195
Wingham, R. 373–374, 376–377
Witschel, Chr. 203
Wood remains 189
Working population 187

Xanten 41

Yersinia pestis bacillus 201

Greek

Αήττητος 311, 315–326
Αἰώνιος 317–318
Θειότατος 316–318
Κάμπος τοῦ τριβουναλίου 328
Τύχη 319–320